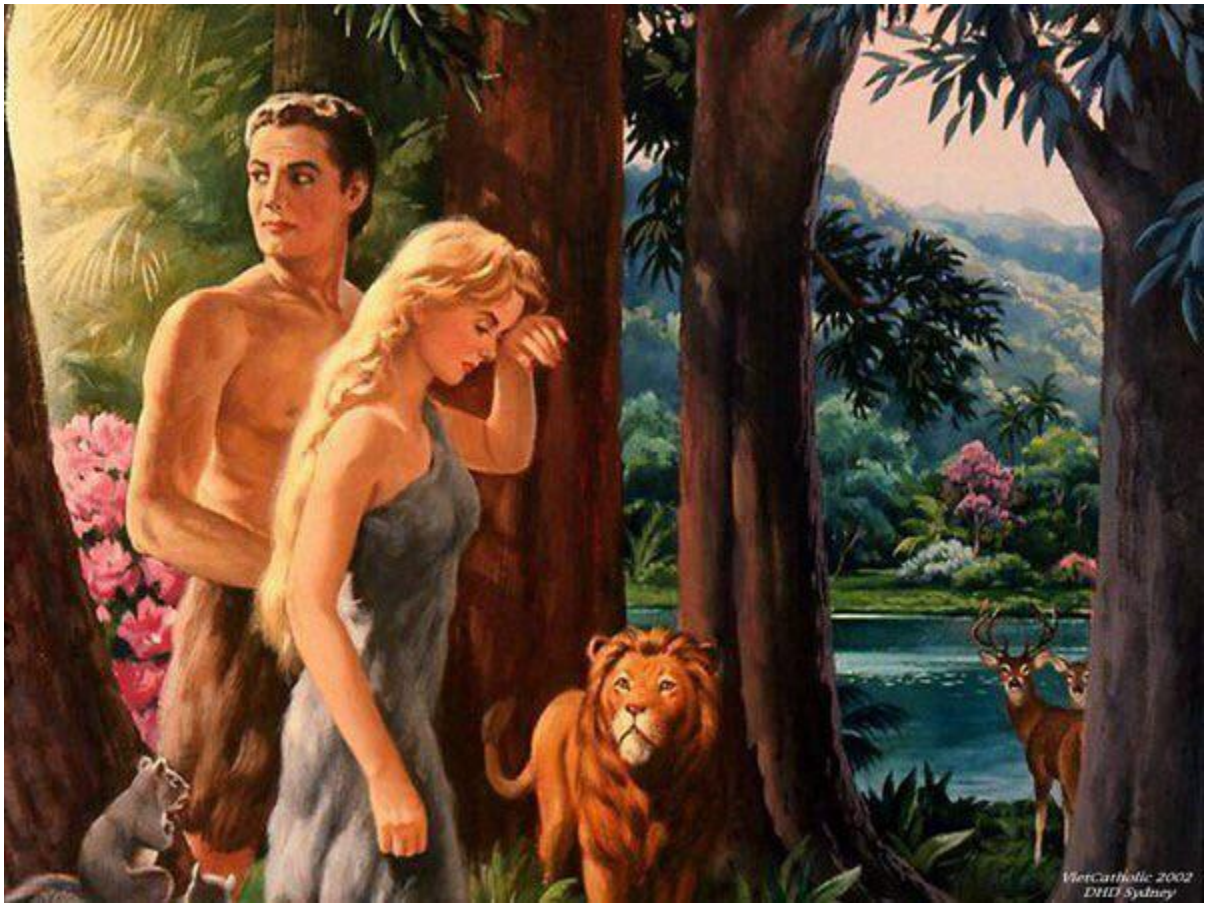
From Creation to Christ:

Understanding the Bible's Chronology



by

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CONTENTS

The Bible's Chronology

Introduction.....…..i
Sources:…….....iv
The Canon of Scripture……..…….x

Creation…….....1
Eden……8

Chronogenealogies……10

Nations……..19

Job.....…….....….21

Jacob and Joseph……..25

Sojourn in Egypt.....36

Conquest……. 59

Judges……..64

Samuel & Saul…….....72

1 Kings 6:1.....……..84

The Divided Kingdoms……97

Persian Period……..103

Christ's Birth……119

Herodian Chronology……..... 129

Daniel's 70 Weeks…….....131

The Crucifixion…….....136

Epilogue…….....….144

Ezekiel 4……..148

Synchronisms with Assyria……..152

The Extra Cainan……155

Archaeology…….....……..158

The Pharaoh of the Exodus…….....163

Red Sea Crossing ……174

The Tempest Stele.....181

Is Esoteric Knowledge Scriptural?.....184

Can Tree Rings Date Noah's Flood?.....…185

Reasonable Boundaries……...….186

References & Endnotes…….....188

Timelines.....….211

Tables

Lifespans .....…..9
Chronogenealogies…….12
Table of Nations.....17
Jacob and Rachel……25
Patriarchal times……. …….35
The Judges…….....66
Samuel/Saul.....73
Hebrew letter values……88
Exodus to Temple..... 93
Kings of Judah…….....102

Ptolemy's King's List…….....102
Dates of Christ's Birth.....…..130
Daniel's 70 Weeks…… 132
Prophets ……..…….187

List of Abbreviations

AU, AUC	The year of Rome (from it's founding in 753 BC).
AD	Anno Domini (Latin): "The Year of the Lord." The 6th c. monk, Dionysius Exiguus, made our modern calendar. He believed Christ was born in 1BC, and the next year after Christ's birth,754 AUC, he called 1 AD, so there is no year 0.
Ant.	Antiquities of the Jews by Josephus (93 AD).
BC	Before Christ (The year of Christ's birth taken as 1 BC, 753 AUC; as no zero year is used in our calendar, the next year after 1 BC is 1 AD).
CCC	Current consensus chronology
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls c.50 BC.
KJV	King James Version, 1769 edition, updating the English of the original 1611 translation.
MKJV	Modern King James Version, Jay P Green, American Christian College Press, Tulsa. 1962; (not a new translation, but a newer edition of the KJV updating the 1769 archaic language only). All verses quoted herein are MKJV unless otherwise stated.
LXX	Septuagint translation. Originally c. 250-150 BC, our oldest complete copy dates to 350AD-Vaticanus, though the Genesis section is a later c.15th century addition. Sinaiticus ~350 AD is more fragmentary with no book Genesis save a few verses. Codex Alexandrinus is 5th c. nearly complete including Genesis.
Mass.	Hebrew Massoretic Text.
MS/MSS	Manuscript (s).
MT	Majority Text (readings attested to based on the majority of the evidence from all sources (MSS, papyri, lectionaries (readings for churches), hymnals, versions, fathers).
NT	New Testament.
NIV	New International Version. Biblica. 1973.
NKJV	New King James Version. Thomas Nelson.1975.
OT	Old Testament.
Sam.	Samaritan Pentateuch, earliest copy c.1100 AD.
Wars	Wars of the Jews by Josephus (75 AD).

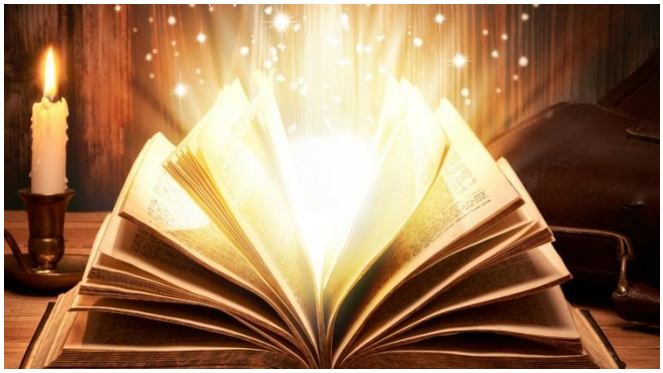
The Bible's Chronology: why does it Matter?

The Bible's chronology gives the only reliable account of history from the beginning of time. It has been said that chronology is the backbone of history, and that the time and sequence of events are what make the past real to us. The bible taken as good teaching in the absence of reliable history undermines the very gospel itself. Jesus taught, "If you do not believe his (Moses') writings, how will you believe My words."(John 5:47). In fact, Wycliffe translators, working among the Balangao people in the Philippines, have reported that the detailed genealogies of scripture going all the way back to the beginning of the world have proven to be a powerful argument for the reality and truth of the entire bible.

According to a poll of a thousand 20-29-year-olds who once were evangelical and believed the bible, 55% said they left because they were taught the bible's history was not true. Specifically, they said the #1 question that caused them to doubt the bible was the age of the earth.[1]

Anne Habermehl says, "Getting the chronology right has huge importance in biblical apologetics. The root of nearly all unbelief in the biblical narratives is that historians and archaeologists cannot find evidences of the Exodus, the conquest of Jericho, David and Solomon—whatever—at the time where they are looking for it."[2] Though many scholars do not believe the Bible's record is true history for reasons unrelated to the text, the Bible itself is plain.

One of the top Hebrew scholars wrote, "So far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or OT at any world class university who does not believe that the writer (s) of Gen. 1-11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that(a) creation took place in a series of 6 days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience (b) the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided by simple addition a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the biblical story."[3]



Although secular sources are of secondary assistance, the bible is the most accurate historical document of antiquity, having been copied so carefully and with so many manuscripts available, to say nothing of divine inspiration. Indeed, the doctrine of inspiration is at the heart of this debate. For if we can change the wording in the first book of the bible to make it say what we want it to say; that is to say, *reading into* the text instead of using the tools of language and grammar to *explain out of* the text it's true meaning, then not only the timescale of the bible is a matter of one's own opinion, but the whole of scripture, even the most important doctrines such as the virgin birth or resurrection of Christ are questionable. "Has God said..." is still the #1 tactic used by our adversary in the battle for the souls of men. (Gen.3:1)

It will be demonstrated that, although the bible itself gives no dates, these times are possible to discern as one pays careful attention to the statements of scripture. There is room however for various interpretations for specific periods of time, but some models have more evidence than others, and all scriptural models have definite boundaries. Where there is need for interpretation of a verse, the fundamental hermeneutical principle of perspicuity will be our guide; that its to say, the plain meaning of the words and phrases will be held to unless there is sufficient scriptural (not from archaeology, traditions, popular commentators, etc.) evidence to believe in another reading.

Many chronologers hold to their systems absolutely, and most commentators these days hold to the same standard timetable, commonly called the current consensus chronology; even saying, “this is *the* bible date” (e.g.: the date of the Exodus); but the study of bible Chronology is a science, not a doctrine. Neither is it an esoteric search for septenary, millennial, or other numerical correlations, symbolic or mystical.

As any science, all dates proposed should be subject to modification should new evidence be revealed, or a better fitting theory proposed. Therefore, any timelines proposed herein are tentative, and probably never will have "fixed" dates, as so many chronologies are said to have, but these are very plausible models to work with.

This is essentially a quote book, quoting primarily from the bible, but also quoting from church fathers and chronologers from the past 2000 years. As such, it is intended to be a reference guide for the further study of this subject, and once the reader is thoroughly familiar with the subject, he is encouraged to put together his own timeline so he can have reasonable dates, based on his own careful study of the word, for the historical events in scripture, and possibly add them to the columns of his own bible.

As we read our bibles, chapter by chapter, it is more relevant to have dates to go along with the historical events, even as many bibles from 1675 to 1970 used to carry Bishop Ussher's dates on every page. The study of Bible chronology is important for the Christian faith not only insofar as it establishes the historicity of Scripture; but it verifies statements in the NT concerning the past. In fact, that turning point in public opinion on the bible, the Scopes trial in 1925, hinged on the date of creation; and that the preacher on the witness stand could not answer basic questions on the early chapters in Genesis.

As we need to be able to defend our faith, we should especially be prepared to answer those who question the historicity of Noah's flood, creation, and the beginning of nations as occurring only thousands of years ago, as the bible plainly indicates.

I have found that to gain a good foundation, this subject requires more study than any other in Scripture. Since most do not have the time to read or even locate much of the literature on this subject, and being the Bible's chronological data is woven throughout the books of the bible, and the search for answers is as challenging as using clues to search for hidden treasures, my aim in writing this *overview* is to supply a tool for those who want to get more into their Bibles, comparing scripture with scripture to develop a more biblically supported timeline of the beginnings of history.

Bible chronology has been called an enigma and a puzzle, and rightly so. Woven throughout scripture, there are lists of ancestors, genealogical chronologies, reigns of kings and judges, lump sum time periods, and every kind of clue to tantalize anyone who loves to solve a good mystery. These records are given in such voluminous quantity and detail for a reason, and that reason, as is with the more important verses, is to strengthen our faith. For the more we can evidence the trustworthiness of scripture in a historical framework, the better we can defend our faith, both to others and to ourselves.

There are many these days attempting to add many thousands of years to the genealogies recorded in scripture (Genesis 5&11), in order to accommodate popular archaeological, geological, and cosmological dates, which the Bible clearly will not support.

Also, many say that the dates after Gen. 11 and Abraham are easily determined, and now there is a scholarly consensus, so why study further? Others devise number schemes, not only to determine historical dates, but also to predict the events foretold in the future. Peter stated in 2P1:16, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables," and neither do we need to follow cunningly devised chronologies. The bible states, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings is to search out a matter." (Pr.25:2).

However, because the amount of material dealing with the times and ages is so voluminous, the study of the chronology of events in scripture requires an inordinate amount of time. My aim therefore, in writing this "overview," is to put at one's fingertips many of the best arguments by eminent scholars, both past and present, while quoting from every verse in the bible that affects a biblical timetable.

We must also remember that the bible's chronology is not based on second hand accounts or embellished stories as so much of ancient history is, but rather is based on historical records, as revealed by the Spirit of the One who was there from the beginning: "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"(2P 1:21). The Bible itself gives no dates, but these times are revealed, albeit within reasonable ± boundaries, as one pays careful attention to the chronological statements of scripture.

Rather than putting one's trust in some cherished version or prominent theologian, bible chronology should be based primarily on one's own careful study and sound exegesis of God's Word, with other sources of secondary importance at best. As will be seen in the chapters following, there is room for various interpretations for the periods of time according to scripture, but some models have more evidence than others, and all these models have definite boundaries.

The study of bible chronology is an account of history from the beginning of time. Many people think that this subject is a waste of time, and for the early period of history, many think that there are long unknown amounts of time missing in gaps in the earliest genealogies (Genesis 5 and 11); therefore pursuing this area of study is in vain, and attempting to date the major events in ancient history is futile (Creation, Noah's flood, Babel).

This study will attempt to show that there are no gaps, either between Gen.1:1 & 1:2 or between the days of creation or between the genealogies in Genesis 5 or 11; and that it is possible to construct a chronology of world history from the very beginning. Suffice it to say that the reasons for proposing these gaps are to accommodate the prevailing theories of geologic ages, radiometric dating systems, chronology building (matching tree rings through questionable statistical probabilities, and piecing together the rings of various old wood samples), secular theories on when civilizations began, or the question of how starlight billions of light years away reached the earth during creation week.

The study of bible chronology is not a doctrine; neither is it some esoteric search for a hidden timetable of God's plans; therefore all who study this subject may come to his own conclusions (within scriptural limits), but the intent of studying this area is that everyone should come away from this endeavor with a stronger faith in the historicity and trustworthiness of God's word.

Sources

Since there are many sources for the Bible, it should be determined at the outset which ones carry more "weight" than the others. Typically, scholars will say the oldest MSS in the original language would be most authentic. With the Old Testament scriptures though, until recently (1989), scholars only had the Massoretic text of the Hebrew bible. These MSS are very late indeed (900-1000AD). Now we have the Dead Sea Scrolls (150-~30BC). After studying these (there are English translations since 1991), it is obvious that these say the same thing as the Massoretic copies do, even more unambiguously in the area of chronology (see Ex 12:40-41 DSS).

"Consequently, before the DSS were discovered the most notable manuscript of the Hebrew Bible was the Leningrad Codex, from the early 11th Century, and comparisons between Isaiah in this manuscript and the complete Isaiah MSS from the DSS showed a breathtakingly few number of variants. A few spelling changes, and grammar changes, but nothing at all substantial. That is after 1200 years of manual copyist transmission. So much for the game of telephone! So really, there is very little to concern ourselves with in regards to the 'reliability of the MT', the data seems to indicate that it contains something extremely close to the originals."[1]

Still, many chronologers prefer the Greek LXX translations (they differ from each other) or Sam. text in certain verses, if not their entire chronologies. The original LXX was presumably made by 72 Jewish scholars in c.250 BC. That they were not from Israel is demonstrated by their peculiar Alexandrian words and expressions. And in Genesis 5, exactly 100 years are added to all but one person, presumably to stretch the genealogies so as to accommodate a more ancient creation/flood date, compatible with Egypt's chronology (see Manetho), where the original LXX started (Alexandria). Hassel states, "The small alteration in the case of Lamech may be due to the LXX desire to place his death and that of Methuselah in the year of the Flood."[2] And though we know Methuselah did not survive the flood, this Alexandrian bible has him outlive the flood by 14 years! (and it is obvious that none survived the flood but Noah's family of eight: Gen.8:16; 1 Peter 3:20)

Sources

What about the Samaritan Pentateuch? It too lengthens the chronogenealogies in Gen. 5 & 11. These scrolls of the Hebrew bible were supposedly first written in Hezekiah's time, though the copies we have are 10th c AD. As an example of their emendations to the text, Gen 11:26 states, “And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Since Abram was mentioned first, the copyists of the Samaritan Pentateuch assumed he was the first-born son, and therefore decreased the age of Nahor’s begetting at age 135 to 65. The Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological & Ecclesiastical Literature states, "It is well understood that the Sam. text here (Gen 5 & 11) as well as elsewhere, is merely fabricated from the Greek; and those who treat it as an independent authority only show themselves ignorant on the subject."[3]

Then there are the translations, ancient hymnals, lectionaries (church readings) and quotes from church fathers to consider. So how do we resolve this? Is the study of bible chronology a waste of time? The short answer is: we resolve problems one at a time.

Our oldest chronological information comes from Moses, who wrote the book of Genesis in c.1500 BC. Our translations naturally are much later; and as they differ in their chronological information, the selection on which ones to use is of paramount importance.

So what is the value of the other sources. Some say Josephus numbers are correct because he said he translated from the Hebrew, and so had a Hebrew MS to translate from[4] (which he got from the temple before it was torched?) His numbers in Genesis agree with the LXX, but Josephus' numbers are sometimes contradictory, and the popular Greek MSS disagree in answering chronological problems. In any case, the oldest MS evidence we have are found in the DSS. Though fragmentary, we have 3 chronological verses showing they follow the Massoretic chronology, not the LXX (Gen5:13,Ex.12:40,41).

Even scholars who like the LXX, which we read from the 3 main sources; the Alexandrinus; the Vaticanus, & the Sinaiticus manuscripts, admit they often differ in their chronologies. Concerning their chronologies in Genesis, Barnes states, “The Samaritan and the Septuagint follow a uniform plan; the Hebrew does not and therefore has the mark of originality.”[5]

The LXX differs from the Hebrew text by over a millennium. So, the text one uses greatly influences his dates prior to the exodus (and the book of Exodus). The LXX has 1380 years more than the MT in the Genesis genealogies, ch.5&11, and 215 less in Exodus 12:40,41. Because of his numbers, we note that Josephus, in the main, uses a chronology conforming to the LXX. But he says he translated from “our sacred books” into the Greek tongue.”

In Against Apion, he states, “Those Antiquities contain the history of five thousand years, and are taken out of our sacred books; but are translated by me into the Greek tongue.” (Against Apion 1.1). He wrote them in the 13th year of Domition, (93AD, Dissertation 5.1)

Sources

If this is so, his numbers should line up with our oldest Hebrew witness, the DSS. Though fragmentary, we have Gen.5:13 from cave 4 (150-50BC): "Kenan lived after he became the father of Mahalalel eight hundred forty years, and became the father of other sons and daughters."(4q2) The Massoretic reads,"And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters"(KJV) The LXX copies which we have and Josephus say 740. Whatever source Josephus used, it was not according the oldest Hebrew Mansusript evidence we possess.

Josephus

As for his contradictions, many have commented on this; so just a few chronological ones should suffice:

1. In Antiquities 5.4.1 He has Israel 38 years in the wilderness; the bible states 40.
2. Antiquities 8:7.8 says, "Solomon was already an old man, having reigned 80 years and lived 94. 1Ki_11:42 states, "And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years."
3. He says Nehemiah came before Xerxes (Ant.9.5.6,7) in his supposed 25th year, the scriptures say the 20th year of Artaxerxes.(Neh.2:1).

In Antiquities 1:18.1 he says, "now Isaac's wife proved with child after the death of Abraham." But Rebecca had her sons when Isaac was 60, and Isaac was born when Abram was 100, making Abram 160 at the birth of his grandchildren, and he lived 15 more years! ("175"Gen.25:7).

Gooding states, "In Christendom, the Septuagint, used as a convenient translation by the early missionaries to Greek-speaking parts, came eventually to be more highly regarded, until it was accepted virtually as "the bible" equally authoritative as the Hebrew original. In consequence, when Jerome exposed it's inadequacies, mistakes, unauthorized interpretations and additions, by producing an OT translated direct from the Hebrew, people like Augustine were understandably upset."

"But as with Philo in Judaism (whose exaggerations some of the church fathers followed), so with the christian fathers: excessive veneration of the Greek translation was a development of later, post-apostolic times."[6] Nevertheless, as most of their audience were both Greek speaking and reading, the apostles writing the NT used the Alexandrian OT when it gave a good translation. It must be noted however, that they always went back to the Hebrew when the translations differed.

So we may use any translation, even a sometimes flawed one, when the portion we are quoting from is based on the majority of evidence. But for study purposes, it is easier to read from the most attested, closest to original word for word translation we can find.

Aleppo codex

The oldest Greek translation, the Vaticanus, is dated c.350 AD, and the Hebrew copies we possess, except for the Dead Sea scrolls, are also late: the Aleppo codex c.900AD, and 1000AD for the Leningrad codex. But as these Hebrew copies have been more carefully copied, as both tradition and comparison with the DSS tell us, these will form the basis for our chronological information.

Concerning the Dead Sea Scrolls which date from 50 BC; though not complete, the bible texts, including chronological information therein, agree with the Massoretic. Therefore, the best attested sources are the Hebrew MSS: both Massoretic text and Dead Sea Scrolls, and we should rely on their numbers, unless there is good internal cause not to (such as obvious scriptural contradictions).

I believe that God has preserved His word, primarily in the majority of copies made, as other books are: and in normal circumstances, the best manuscripts will be copied more than the less reliable ones. That still doesn't mean that there wont be some copy errors that get copied, but the errors will be less, and easily discernible. Although the basis for our study is the underlying Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, we need an English translation to communicate, and we want ones that consider the majority of evidence; that is, the evidence from a majority of MSS, church father quotes, hymnals, and church readings, not just the oldest MS extant.

The lesser copied, but older manuscripts, are called Alexandrian, because they originated in Alexandria, Egypt. Many modern translations primarily rely on these Alexandrian MSS. Often, they will footnote an OT Alexandrian LXX reading or a NT Alexandrian MS verse with "the oldest and best manuscripts say," revealing their bias for what they consider the "best." In fact, they can be considered "best" only in the sense they were best preserved. And this, naturally, is because they were not used in the churches, or copied from often.

Sources

Jon Gleason adds, " Those earliest manuscripts that we have today were rarely used, or we wouldn't have them. That is pretty much indisputable. They weren't copied very much, because we have very few later manuscripts that match them at all. They weren't read very much, they weren't used very much for preaching and teaching. If they had been used much for copying, preaching, or reading, they would have perished. They were set aside for some reason.

The overwhelming majority of our manuscripts of the Bible are in so much agreement with each other that some have suggested some kind of great harmonization of texts took place in the fourth century, a sort of benign conspiracy to make sure all manuscripts were in agreement. They are so united that many textual critics discount them as providing any particular evidence to the true text. Roughly ninety percent of our manuscripts make up what is called the majority text. There could have been a harmonization, of course — or it could be that Bible-believing copyists were very careful in faithfully copying the true text from copies which had also been faithfully copied.

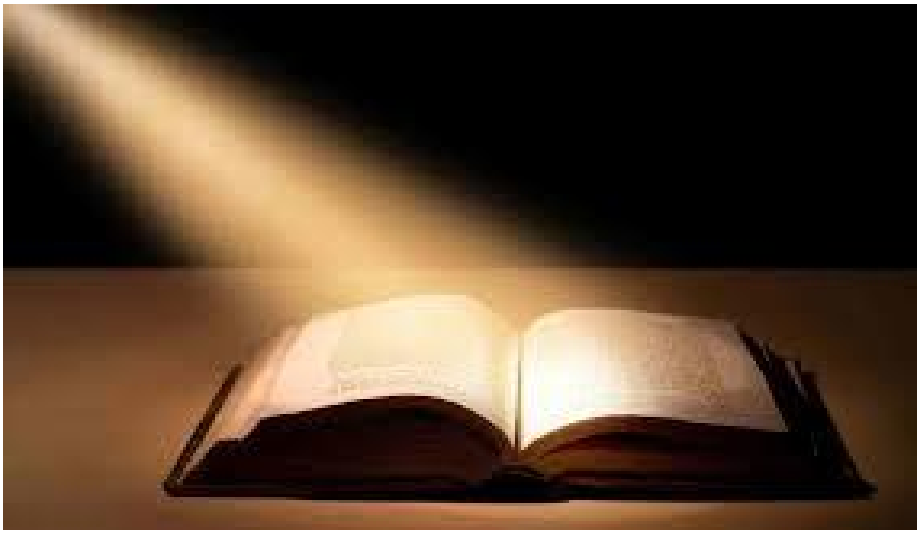
The oldest manuscripts are among those that differ from the great majority of manuscripts, and they also differ among themselves. The two most famous "oldest" manuscripts, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, the primary manuscripts underlying most modern translations today, *differ between themselves in over 3,000 places in the Gospels alone*…But these manuscripts both contain so many obvious errors that even their most ardent advocates question the quality of the scribal work.*"*[6a]

90% of Manuscripts we possess are called Byzantine, and though we base our study on Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, we want to read with a good majority based English translation of them. No translation or MS copy is perfect; minor copy errors are inevitable, and both scribes and translators are fallible. But it cant be repeated enough; these known copy errors (usually involving only one digit) and "difficult passages"can all be resolved.

Moreover, we do have thousands of faithful manuscript copies. Therefore we will study with the time tested King James Version, which was translated only from Byzantine MSS; and I am also using the 1973 edition which only updates the archaic verbs and pronouns without any changes to the text. (the NKJV is also a majority based translation). It should also be remembered, that the original MSS were inspired word for word without error. "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," (2 Peter 1:21), and we need holy men of God moved on by the Holy Spirit, to make a trustworthy translation.

The Canon of Scripture

This is a huge subject, and should be studied separately, but as some explanation is necessary; this will suffice. Got Questions says, "The canon of Scripture refers to all the books in the Christian Bible and Hebrew Scriptures that together constitute the complete and divinely inspired Word of God. Only the books of the canon are considered authoritative in matters of faith and practice. The idea of a closed canon is that the Bible is complete; no more books are being added to it. God is not appending His Word.



A closed canon implies that other religious books that devotees purport to be inspired by God should be rejected as spurious. The Book of Mormon, the Quran, the Vedas, *The Great Controversy*, and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*—all of these are works of men and women and not the product of God's Holy Spirit. Sure, God could add to the canon if He wanted to; but obviously He has not. Many so called prophets in the past two thousand years have gotten words, visions, and appearances telling them to write new scriptures, and all have been proven false.

The canon of Scripture was determined by God, not men. Making this distinction is important. The accepted books were not considered **inspired** because humans determined that they should be part of the canon; **they were included in the canon because God inspired them at the time they were written.** God's people were only responsible for discovering or recognizing the canon. The process of discovery started with Jewish scholars and rabbis and was finalized by the early Christian church by the end of the fourth century.

The development of a complete or closed canon of Scripture formed as the early church tested and discerned what was truly the divinely inspired Word of God. Humanly speaking, the process unfolded imperfectly, but ultimately God's sovereign purpose prevailed…A closed canon doesn't mean God has ceased to reveal Himself to people today but that there will be no *new* revelation of truth outside of what He has already revealed in the Bible to the church"[7]

The Canon of Scripture

FF Bruce states, One thing must be emphatically stated. The New Testament books did not become authoritative for the Church because they were formally included in a canonical list; on the contrary, the Church included them in her canon because she already regarded them as divinely inspired, recognizing their innate worth and generally apostolic authority, direct or indirect. The first ecclesiastical councils to classify the canonical books were both held in North Africa-at Hippo Regius in 393 and at Carthage in 397-but what these councils did was not to impose something new upon the Christian communities but to codify what was already the general practice of these communities .[8]

JI.Packer says, "The church no more gave us the New Testament canon than Sir Isaac Newton gave us the force of gravity. God gave us gravity, by his work of creation, and similarly he gave us the New Testament canon, by inspiring the individual books that make it up.[9]

Yamauchi adds, "The apocryphal gospels are non-canonical writings of a motley variety about the purported deeds and revelations of Jesus Christ. Though the Greek word apocrypha originally meant "hidden," the church fathers used it to describe spurious writings foisted as gospels.

Irenaeus refers to 'an unspeakable number of apocryphal and spurious writings, which they themselves (i. e. the heretics) had forged to bewilder the minds of the foolish.' Although some of them were patterned after the canonical gospels, many bear little resemblance to them. As Origen noted, The Church possesses four Gospels, heresy a great many'[10]

Several OT books were supposedly added to the canon by the council of Trent in 1546, affecting the Roman catholic churches (**Sirach, Baruch, Wisdom, Tobit, 1&2 Maccabees, Judith, additions to Daniel, and Esther).** But this was in reaction to the ongoing Protestant reformation which began in 1517; and was not endorsed by a majority of churches, as was true of the 66 books. Further, the Eastern Orthodox added to this 1Esdras, Psalm 151, Prayer of Manasseh, and 3 Maccabees. The Ethiopic church also added 1 Enoch to their bible. Are each of us individually to be the arbiters of the canon?

King adds, "This would fit with what Jerome says elsewhere about the practise of the Church concerning other writings of the Apocrypha:

'As, then, the Church reads Judith, Tobit, and the books of Maccabees, but does not admit them among the canonical Scriptures, so let it also read these two Volumes (Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus) for the edification of the people, not to give authority to doctrines of the Church…'

In any case, it's clear that the vast majority of theologians, bishops and cardinals throughout the Middle Ages followed Jerome's view of the cannon and explicitly rejected the Apocryphal books as non-inspired, or implicitly rejected them by limiting the number of inspired Books to the Hebrew canon. See for example, Cardinal Cajetan, Gregory the Great, Agobard of Lyons, Walafrid Strabo, Haymo of Halberstadt, Ambrose of Autpert, Radulphus Flavicencius, Hugh of St. Victor, Richard of St. Victor, John of Salisbury, Peter Cellensis, Honorius of Autun (Augustodunensis), Hugh of St. Cher (Hugo Cardinalis), Philip of Harvengt, Nicholas of Lyra, William of Ockham, Antoninus, Alonso Tostado, Dionysius (Denys) the Carthusian, Thomas Walden (Netter), Jean Driedo, John Ferus, and Jacobus Faber Stapulensis. See also, the preface to both The Glossa Ordinaria and the Biblia Complutensia. Both sources were widely held and endorsed. "[10a]

Some also claim that since God still speaks to us through the spiritual gift of tongues and interpretation, or prophesy; that means He is not done with the canon, but more can be added. Prophesying though must be judged by other prophets.1 Cor.14:29 says" Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge." The canon however is self-authenticating. Paul, in 1Co 14:37says, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (see also Rev.2:20). In addition, the false religions and cults today abound with these extra-biblical writings, as did the early church (that is why the so called "lost books" were lost). Being it's 2000 years later, we can look back and see how God kept the canon pure. So let us look at what were the requirements for the church to accept a book as Scripture.

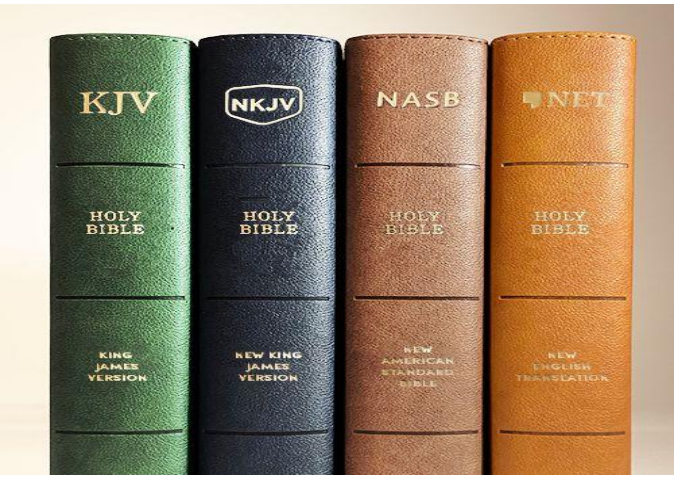
The Canon of Scripture

Compelling Truth says, "The principles used by the councils to determine whether a New Testament book was truly inspired by the Holy Spirit were fourfold. First, the author must be an apostle or have a close connection with an apostle.

Second, the book must have been accepted by the body of Christ at large. Third, the book had to contain consistency of doctrine and orthodox teaching. Finally, the book had to bear evidence of high moral and spiritual values that would reflect a work of the Holy Spirit as the divine Author.

Most importantly, however, it must be recognized that it was God, and God alone, who determined which books belonged in the Bible. God, via the inspiration of the Spirit, imparted to His followers what He had already decided. The human process of collecting the books of the Bible was flawed, but God, in His sovereignty, and despite the limitations of sinful man, brought the early church to the recognition of the books He had inspired, and those books are recognized today as the canon of Scripture."[11]

Finally, concerning the NT, Brian Edwards concludes, "Our final appeal is not to man, not even to the early church leaders, but to God, who by His Holy Spirit has put His seal upon the New Testament. By their spiritual content and by the claim of their human writers, the 27 books of our New Testament form part of the "God breathed" Scripture. It is perfectly correct to allow this divine intervention to guard the process by which eventually all the canonical books—and no others—were accepted. The idea of the final canon being an accident, and that any number of books could have ended up in the Bible, ignores the evident unity and provable accuracy of the whole collection of 27 books. A belief in the authority and inerrancy of Scripture is bound to a belief in the divine preservation of the canon.[12]



Creation

"IN THE BEGINNING, God created the heavens and the earth." Gen. 1:1 (NKJV). The word for heaven here is shamayim, a plural, "and can be translated either "heaven" or "heavens" depending on the context and on whether it is associated with a singular or plural verb. H. Morris comments, "It does not mean the stars of heaven, which were made only on the 4th day of creation week (Gen. 1:16), and which constitute the "host" of heaven, not heaven itself (Gen. 2:1) … It seems, however, that the essential meaning of the word corresponds to our modern term *space,* such as when we speak of the universe as a universe of space and time…Understood in this way, it can also refer either to space in general or to a particular space, just as we may speak of 'outer space', 'inner space', 'atmospheric space', and so forth. In Gen. 1:1, the term refers to the component of space in the basic space-mass-time universe."[1]

Some believe that Gen 1:1 is not describing the creation of the heavens and the earth, but is rather a summary verse of the whole creation week. They see the summary verses in 2:1,4 as supporting 1:1 as also a summary.

Dr. Morris adds, "The summary in fact is given in Genesis 2:4: 'These are the generations of the heaven and the earth when they were created….' Furthermore, Genesis 2:1 notes the termination of the work of the 6 days of creation by the following summary: 'Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them.' This statement clearly refers to the work of the previous 6 days, including the first day. However, it includes 'the heavens' in this summary; and the only mention of the heavens during the six days is in Genesis 1:1. In other words, the primeval creation of the heaven and the earth in the beginning was the first act of the first day of the six days calling into existence the basic elements of the space-mass-time continuum which constitutes the physical universe."[2]

So what about the third heaven and all the angelic hosts? They are created beings; so does this include them? Job 38:4,7 states, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?… when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Therefore, though unmentioned, their creation logically would be God's first act of creating on day one.

Concerning "The beginning," Leupold states: "The phrase "in the beginning" (*bereshith*) refers to the absolute beginning of created things, to the '*Uranfang*' ...Because this noun Bereshith is without the article, that does not allow for this being taken as a genitive or construct case, viz. "in the beginning of God's creating", etc. for with that rendering attention is at once centered on the second verse and no reason appears for mentioning "the beginning" at all."[3]

Some say that the days in Gen. 1 do not have to be days of 24-hour length. Pat Robertson says, "A solar day was different from an earth day; a galactic day is different from a solar day; and a universal day is different from a galactic day."[4] Although this use of the word "day" may or may not be valid in modern astronomy, it certainly is not in scripture.

As John Calvin pointed out, "**It is the first business of an interpreter to let the author say what he does say, instead of attributing to him what we think he ought to say**."[5] Some also argue that the grammar of Gen.1 implies that the days were not normal. They base this on the lack of a definite article on the term "day" for days 2,3,4, & 5; however there is a good argument why the grammar is different on days one, six, and seven.

Sarfati says, "That the words repeated after each day of creating in Gen.1:1: e.g.: "the evening and the morning were the 1st day" indicate a 24 hour solar day as clear as language can describe is also evidenced by the scriptures in Exodus 20:9-11: "Six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the 7th day is the Sabbath of the Lord, your God. In it you shall not do any work…For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested the 7th day…"[6]

Some attempt to say that these days are from God's perspective; and from billions of light years away, a day could mean a very long period of time;[7] however Ex. 20:11 is plainly written from man's perspective. Daslakas says, "Events we witness, such as supernovas exploding, could even be much more recent than creation week, if the universe is much larger than we currently detect. [7a]

As H. Morris says “Such a cyclical light-dark arrangement clearly means that the earth was now rotating on its axis and that there was a source of light on one side of the earth corresponding to the sun, even though the sun was not yet made (Genesis 1:16). It is equally clear that the length of such days could only have been that of a normal solar day. It should be noted that in the Hebrew Old Testament, “day,” Heb: “yom”, without exception never means “period.”

It normally means either a day (in the 24-hour sense), or else the daylight portion of the 24 hours (day as distinct from “night”). It may occasionally be used in the sense of indefinite time (e.g. “in the time of the judges”), but never as a definite period of time with a specific beginning and ending.”[8]

“Furthermore, it is not used even in this indefinite sense except when the context clearly indicates that the literal meaning is not intended.”

T. Epp states, “When a long indefinite period of time is meant, the Hebrew word *olam* is used. This word could have been used if an age instead of a 24-hour day had been meant. However, the Holy Spirit guided Moses in selecting *yom*, instead of *olam*, in order to present the kind of day that was meant.” [9]

There are also those who quote the first part of 2 Peter 3:8: "...that one day is with the lord as a thousand years" as evidence these days are not literal solar days. As Kistemaker says, "In the first two centuries of the Christian era, however, some writers explained this verse in terms of a thousand-year period. These authors used only the words, 'With the Lord, a day is like a thousand years,' and developed a millennial doctrine. Thus, the unknown author of the epistle of Barnabas writes that 'the Lord will make and end of everything in 6000 years, for a day with Him means a thousand years.' And Irenaeus says, 'For the day of the Lord is as a thousand years; and in 6 days created things were completed: it is evident therefore that they will come to an end at the 6000th year.' These early Christian writers neglect to recite the second part of verse 8, 'and a thousand years are like a day.' This cancels out the first part of the verse and therefore makes it difficult to develop a millenary theory."[10]

A like verse, Ps.90:4, also is clear when read in the context of Ps. 90; contrasting God's eternal perspective with our brief life spans, not symbolically equating a day with a thousand years. Even the millennial period, which is stated to be 1000 years, has Satan being loosed for a short time after, as Rev. 20:2,3 says, "…and he laid hold on…Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit…till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and *after that* he must be loosed a little season." Thus, even this last dispensation, which is a millennial period, is not exactly 1000 years (to the day).

Also popular is the gap proposed between Gen 1:1 and 1:2, proposing a divine cataclysmic judgment on earth because of Satan's sin and expulsion from heaven. Genesis 1:2 states, "And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." Some attempt to equivocate the word "*was"* with "*became,"* and insert a story of prior ruin and reconstruction here. Rev. Chalmers followed the deep time views popularized by geologist James Hutton's work, Theory of the Earth, 1788. Chalmer's gap/ ruin-reconstruction theory, finds its roots in 2nd/13th century Jewish kabbalistic mysticism: the Zohar says: "The earth was Tohu and Bohu. These indeed are the worlds of which it is said that the blessed God created them and destroyed them, and, on that account, the earth was desolate and empty."[10a]

Thus it is urged that we translate "the earth was form and void" thus: "*the earth became ruined and desolate."* The justification for the verb change has been shown to be lacking, and the "ruined and desolate" theory is said to be based on Isaiah 45:18 which says, "He created it not in vain; He formed it to be inhabited." Sarfati states, "… the correct Hebrew idiom for "become" is to attach the verb "to be;" for example, "was" to the preposition "to" (Hebrew *le*). The verb "to be" does not mean "become" without this preposition. Since Gen. 1:2 lacks the preposition, it *cannot* mean "became."[11]

As H. Morris points out, "The gap theory also proposes that the word translated "was" (Hebrew hayetha) should really be translated "became," thus suggesting a change of state from the original perfect creation to the chaotic condition inferred from verse 2. Although such a translation is grammatically possible, it is highly unlikely in this particular context."

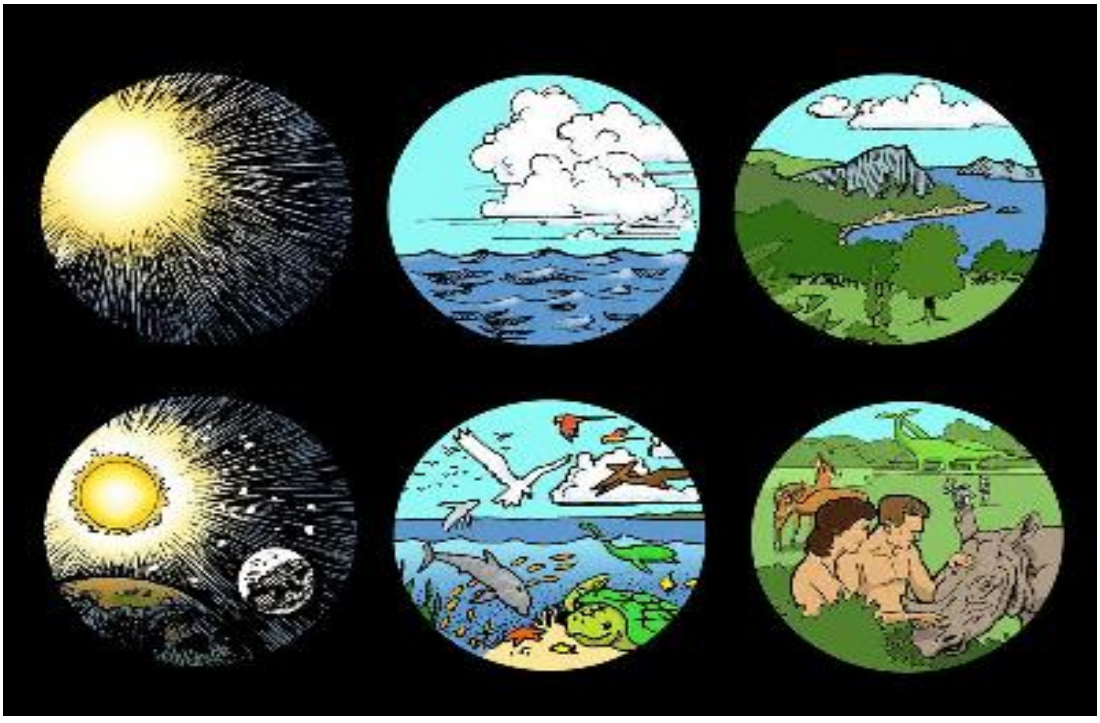
"The verb is the regular Hebrew verb of being (hayetha), not the word normally used to denote a change of state (haphak). Although hayetha can also, if the context warrants, be introduced to indicate a change of state, it simply means 'was' in 98% of its occurrences.

That is why the KJ and every other standard translation of the bible, Gen.1:2 is always translated 'was', never 'became.'" [12] On the words, "form and void," Morris adds, "The phrase is in Hebrew, tohu wavohu or tohu waw bohu. The gap theory suggests that these words should really be translated "ruined and desolate" or some such phrase. It would then speak of a divine cataclysmic judgment which had been visited on the earth and which had left it in a chaotic and ruined condition."

In justification of this claim, reconstructionists maintain that God, being perfect, would never create the universe in a chaotic state. Therefore, they say, such a state must have come about long after the creation itself, probably because of Satan's sin and judgment.

Furthermore, they point out, Isaiah 45:18 specifically says that God created not the earth in vain (Hebrew tohu); He formed it to be inhabited." Such an interpretation of Gen.1:2 however, is very forced and unnatural. The word tohu can carry various shades of meaning. It occurs 20 times in the Old Testament and is translated in the KJV no less than 10 different ways (vanity, confusion, empty space, nothing, etc.) Its proper translation depends on the specific context, and the best translation of the context of Gen 1:2 is exactly as the King James scholars rendered it: "without form."

Similarly, the context of Isaiah 45:18 (having to do with God's purpose for the land of Israel) makes the best translation there to be "in vain." Paraphrasing, the message can be read, "God created not the earth (to be) forever unformed and uninhabited; He formed it to be inhabited." The creation narrative, in Gen.1 tells the steps by which He brought form to the unformed earth and living inhabitants to its empty surface." [13]



Leupold, referring to the words, “form & void”(Heb: *tohu wavohu*), adds, “Now *tohu* as such originally means *unformedness* (K.W.) and so can come to mean a “waste” only in the sense of being not yet put into shape, not in the sense of having been laid waste by some catastrophe as all those would postulate who try at every point to make room for geologic periods of development. All later usage of the word points in the same direction…The passage Jer.4:23 is not at variance with these claims, for though it pictures a state of desolation by the quotation of the whole phrase *tohu wavohu*, it evidently means that the land is again to be reduced to a state like unto the primeval chaos."

"Isa.24:10 is analogous. 'Bohu' is derived from a root “to be empty,” therefore “emptiness.” It is applicable to a region without inhabitants of any kind; its thought is clearly distinct from tohu. Both terms together then indicate two directions in regard to which the newly created world will undergo further changes: First, it must be shaped and formed into definite molds; secondly, it must be peopled with all kinds of inhabitants or beings.”[14]

Lastly, there are those who propose a gap between “heavens” and “earth” in Gen.1:1, and a long period in verse 2 when the “Spirit moved upon the face of the waters.” Gray argues for a “deliberate time delay while the Spirit of God broods or hovers over a darkened ocean….He hovers, flutters, broods, gently moves over the ocean night, possibly for extended ages.”[15]

They propose an indeterminate length of time in these places in order to solve some scientific questions, such as how starlight from distant galaxies could reach us in a young universe. Therefore, when day four records, “He made the stars also (Gen.1:16); this is supposed to mean that on day four He “revealed” the stars, and not that He created them.

However, it has been noted that the Hebrew word for made here is the normal word translated made, “asah.” The Hebrew has a word for “appear,” ra’ah, which in fact is used in verse 9, “Let the dry land appear,” but He purposely does not use ra’ah here. In other words, the stars were not made sometime in the distant past as some claim, and only *revealed* on the 4th day.

Again, quoting Morris, "On the first day, He said, 'Let there be light!' (Hebrew *or*). On the 4th day He said; 'Let there be lights' (or light-givers, Hebrew *ma-or*). Intrinsic light first, then generators of light later, is both the logical and biblical order."[16]

Don Batten adds, "Gen 1:1 says that God made the sun, moon, and stars on day 4 of the creation week (1:14-19). Gap theorists such as Mr. Gray try to get around this clear teaching by proposing that the sun, moon, and stars merely appeared on Day 4 (but who was there on the earth to see it?) …

However, the land animals were 'made' (Heb:"asah" v.25) as was the sky (v. 6-8) and no one interprets these passages to mean that they just appeared, or were revealed, having been created at some earlier time! Further more, the Hebrew has a word for "appear', ra'ah, used in Gen 1:9 where God said, "let the dry land appear (ra'ah)' (from under the water). God could have inspired the writer of His holy word to use this word regarding the sun, moon, and stars if He only caused them to appear (from behind the cloud). **But He did not**.

In Gen.1:26 God said, 'Let us make man in our own image', and v.27 says, 'So God created man in His own image'. This clearly shows that 'make' and 'create' (Heb. bara) are used interchangeably in Gen 1. Also, asah ('make') never has the meaning of 'to show' in the sense of revealing something hidden."[17]

To complete our overview of Creation, we mention in passing that there are also non-historical, non-literal interpretations such as taking Gen.1 as an allegory or parable[18], or saying that the days of creating were really "days of revelation" when God explained in 6 days (to Adam and Eve) what He had previously done in eons of time.[19]

This is plainly refuted in Isaiah 40:21, which makes it clear that man was here from the beginning: "Has it not been told you from the beginning; have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?" Also, Rom 1:20 says, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." They are clearly seen by who? By people. People clearly have seen these things that are made from the very beginning of creation!

Theodore Epp states, "Time marks the beginning of created existence."[20] As our Lord said in Mark 13:19, "For in those days shall be great affliction such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be," and again in Mark 10:16: "From the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female." Therefore, the time of the creation of the heavens (Heb: *shamayim*: upper regions) and the earth in Gen.1:1 is the same time that Adam was created (less 5 days)." H. Morris comments, "Christ was there, for He was the creating word of God, and He has told us that the human race dates from the beginning of the creation, not 15 billion years after the beginning."[21]

It must also be added that the days of creation rest on a New Testament doctrine. Paul states plainly that there was no death before sin. Adding millions or even thousands of years in Genesis 1 would mean animals were dying before Adam sinned. Death for man and animal life was and is punishment for Adam's sin (Gen.2:16-17).

Thus Rom. 5:12 states, "**Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin**, and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." Also, I Cor. 15:21 says, "**For since by man came death**, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

As Ken Ham states, "**As part of the Curse, God told Adam in *Genesis 3:19* that he would return to the dust from which he was made, showing that the sentence of death was not only spiritual, but physical as well... This big picture also fits with *Romans 8*, which says that the whole creation "groans" because of the effects of the Fall of Adam—it was not "groaning" with death and suffering before Adam sinned.** Adding millions or even thousands of years in Genesis 1 would mean animals were dying before Adam sinned." **Rom. 8:21: "...the whole creation groans and travails til now."**

"Death" in scripture always refers to beings that have "nephesh" or breath. It does not refer to lower life forms or plants. Ken Ham continues: "Nephesh or *nephesh chayyah* is never used to describe plants in the Old Testament. They only describe people and animals. Just as plants are not "alive" in the same sense as animals and man are, so also, they do not "die" in the same sense.[22]

In the end, what matters most is the question: "Who or what is your authority?" If your favorite scholar,teacher, or scientist tells you that you don't have to take the bible as the very words of the Creator in Genesis, or that God is speaking poetically, and doesn't know how to communicate with us; then why believe the words of life in the New Testament. What are you basing your hope of eternity on?

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.
I Cor.15:26

Eden

As for the questions people have concerning the time Adam and Eve spent in Eden; it must have been very short. The first mention of Adam "knowing" his wife (carnal knowledge) is after they are ushered out of Paradise. Remember, they were commanded to "be fruitful and multiply" Gen.1:28, and their first sin was eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, not disobeying this command to multiply.

What about the location of Eden? The bible gives details in Gen.2:10-14, but they don't match any place on the planet. Remember, Noah's flood was devastating: "All the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened" Gen.7:11, and the waters reached 22 feet above the highest mountains at the time. (Gen.7:20). Ps.104:6 states, "The waters stood above the mountains.

Gen. 2:10-14 states: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first *is* Pison: that *is* it which compasses the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold; And the gold of that land *is* good: there *is* bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river *is* Gihon: the same *is* it that compasses the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river *is* Hiddekel(Tigris): that *is* it which goes toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates."

Barnes states, ""It is the habit of the sacred writers not to neglect the old names of former writers, but to append to them or conjoin with them the later or better-known equivalents, when they wish to present a knowledge of the place and its former history. Thus, "Bela, this is Zoar" Gen_14:2, Gen_14:8; "Kiriath-Arba, this is Hebron" Gen_33:2; "Ephrath, this is Bethlehem" Gen_35:19. Sixth, these names would be originally personal; and hence, we can see a sufficient reason why the sons of Noah renewed them in their families, as they were naturally disposed to perpetuate the memory of their distinguished ancestors."[23]

.Dr John Morris comments: "The key is in recognizing that through the Flood of Noah's day, "the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (II Peter 3:6). As described in Genesis 6-9, the Flood would have totally restructured the surface of the globe. It would have done what major floods do—erode the land surface in one area and redeposit those sediments elsewhere.

Biblically, the Flood covered the planet with processes operating at rates, scales, and intensities far beyond those possible today. No place on Earth could have survived untouched...Today, the Tigris-Euphrates River Valley contains sediments over two miles thick, from which are pumped enormous quantities of oil and gas.

The sediments, now rock, are dramatically bent into modern mountains as well as subsurface mountains, and brutally broken by major fault systems. They deeply cover and obscure any possible pre-flood locations. Furthermore, the basement rock, if indeed it was present before the Flood, would have likely undergone erosion also. No present topography or underground surface could possibly bear any resemblance to the pre-flood world. That world is gone!"

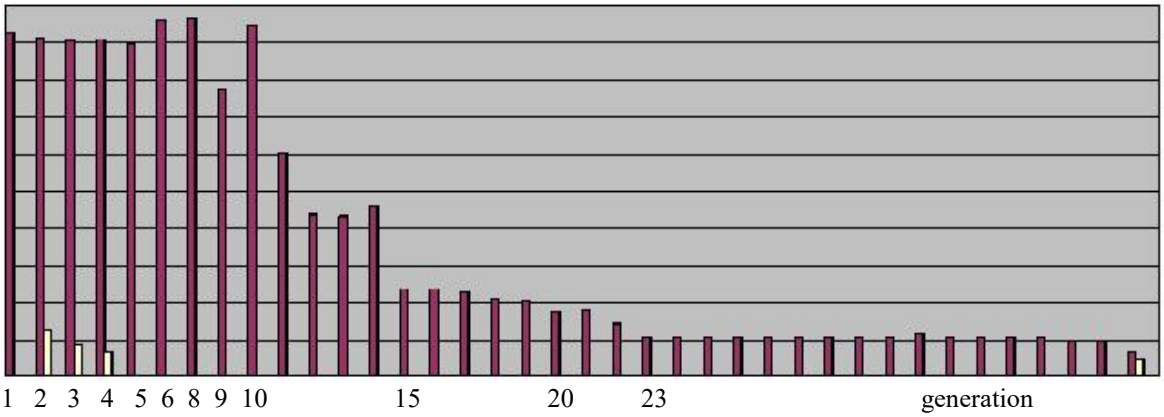
Some would say, but what about the mention of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers? They still exist today. Just because one of the rivers listed is called, "Euphrates" does not mean it's the river by that name today in Iraq. People after Noah's flood naturally named things in the new Earth with many names from before the flood; even as early settlers to America did when they came over from Europe, like York, England and New York or York, PA. When Israel conquered Canaan, they "gave other names to the cities which they built (rebuilt after war) ...their names being changed." Num. 32:38.

Remember, Noah's flood was devastating: "**All** the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened" Gen.7:11), and the waters reached 22 feet above the highest mountains at the time (Gen.7:20). The geologic upheaval of the earth's surface which also separated the continents surely would have wiped out all rivers and landmarks. So the answer to the question: Where was the garden of Eden? is "Nowhere." The surface and subsurface of the earth that then was, is completely gone. (in fact, the mid-ocean ridges throughout the earth's seafloors are "scars" from that event)."The geologic upheaval of the earth's surface surely would have wiped out all rivers and landmarks."[24]

"And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: All in whose nostrils *was* the breath of life, of all that *was* in the dry *land,* died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained *alive,* and they that *were* with him in the ark. Gen 7:21-23

Cain kills Abel

Lifespans



Each horizontal line = 100 years
Enoch is not represented because he did not live a full life
Otherwise, the generations here are complete to 23rd gen. Joseph; abbreviated to David.

1Adam 930	15 Peleg 239
2Seth 912	16Reu 239
3Enos 905	17Serug 230
4Cainan 910	18Nahor 209
5Mahalaleel 895	19Terah 205
6Jared 962	20Abram 175
7Enoch 365	21Isaac 180
8Methuselah 969	22Jacob 147
9Lamech 777	23Joseph 110
10Noah 950	
11Shem 602	
12Arphaxad 438	Joshua 110
13Salah 433	David 70
14Eber 464	

The chronological statements are found in the chronogenealogies of Gen. 5 & 11. Chronogenealogies are genealogies with accompanying time statements. Some attempt to add more time here (gaps) for reasons related to Archaeological or historical datings. For instance, the LXX translation made in Alexandria Egypt adds much more time here. It has been proposed this was done to enhance Jewish history to be more in line with Egyptian history (Manetho). However, genealogical gaps in Genesis 5 & 11 are precluded because the years are given when each patriarch gave birth to the next one. (e.g.: "Shem was 100 years old and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood, and Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad 500 years, and begat sons and daughters, and Arphaxad lived 530 years and begat Salah." Gen.11:10-12). Some have noted that the words, 'beget', 'son of', 'father of' can have a wider range of meaning than the normal father-to-son relationship, and thus, even in Gen. 5 & 11, which states the years when each "son" was born, there could be large gaps.[1]

Chronogenealogies

Some counter that Matthew's list is obviously an abbreviated one, listing 3 groups of 14 generations each; therefore Gen. 5&11 are too. While it is true that some genealogical **lists** have gaps such as in Matthew 1, this does not affect the chronologies. In fact, we only know of these gaps because the bible fills them in elsewhere. Jordan says, "Gaps in genealogies, however, do not prove gaps in *chronologies*. **The known gaps all appear in non-chronological genealogies**."[2] This point needs to be stressed, as so many miss this observation. The accounts themselves rule out many gaps.

For instance, concerning Adam-Seth-Enosh and Lamech-Noah-Arphaxad, gaps are explicitly ruled out.[3] Further, in the New Testament book of Jude, verse 14, Enoch is said to be "the 7th from Adam" confirming no gaps Adam to Enoch in Genesis 5. James Barr, professor of Hebrew at Oxford states, "So far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or OT at any world class University who does not believe that the writer of Gen.1-11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that… the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided by simple addition a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the biblical story."[3a]

Some mention should be made here of the differences between the Hebrew text and the various LXX versions and the Samaritan version. Hasel observes, "A unique feature of the Hebrew text is its lack of a scheme or system…This is different in the Samaritan Pentateuch, where life-spans are decreasing…The Samaritan text adapts itself to the flood…and the addition of 100 years to the ages of the begetting of the firstborn (except for 50 years in the case of Nahor) lead to the supposition that the non-schematic figures of the Hebrew text are original… As far as the genealogy in Matthew is concerned, the schematization is apparent, and can be supported by comparison with genealogical data in the Old Testament.

Chronogenealogies

Can the same be demonstrated for Genesis 5 & 11? A simple counting of Patriarchs in Genesis 5 & 11 reveals that there is no schematic ten-ten sequence. In Gen. 5, there is a line of ten patriarchs from Adam to Noah who had three sons, but in Gen. 11:26, the line of patriarchs consists of only nine members from Shem to Terah who "became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran" (Gen.11:26 NAS).

If Abraham is to be counted as the tenth patriarch in Gen. 11, then consistency requires that Shem is counted as the 11th patriarch in Gen.5, because each genealogy concludes with a patriarch for whom 3 sons are mentioned. It appears that a comparison of Gen. 5:32 and 11:26 reveals that there are no grounds to count one of the 3 sons in one instance and not in the other, when in fact the formula is the same. Thus, if one counts in Gen. 5, ten patriarchs, consistency demands the counting of 9 patriarchs in Gen. 11, or visa-versa, if one counts 11 in Gen. 5, then one needs to count ten in Gen. 11. The figures 10/9 to 11/10 respectively can hardly qualify as an intentional arrangement or symmetry.

In short, the alleged "symmetry of 10 generations before the flood and 10 generations after the flood is non-existent in the Hebrew text; (Kitchen 1966, p.37; cf. Geraty 1974, p.15) thus the analogy with the 3 series of 14 generations in Matt. 1:1-17 is a non-sequitur." [4] (it does not follow)

The LXX in like manner attempts to alter the text. According to the Vatican MS,[4a] Methuselah outlives the flood by 14 years. Later MSS correct this by having both Methuselah and his father, Lamech, die in the year of the flood. Then there is the usual practice of adding 100 years to the ages of begetting. More important from a historical view is the longer period of time added after the flood to Abraham, which is 780 (A) or 880(B) years more than the Hebrew (the LXX scholars may have been influenced by the longer Egyptian chronology of Manetho).

A second Cainan is also in our copies of the LXX, not only in Gen 11, but 10:34, and some have him in 1 Chron 1:18,24.[5] (see The Second Cainan in the Appendix). The solution to the addition of a second "Cainan" in Luke's list in Luke 3:36 which Luke copied from Genesis 5 has been shown to be a later addition to copies of Luke, as we now possess earlier evidence without the second Cainan (~200 AD, papyrus 75).[6] Also, Beza's 6th century copy of Luke, *Catabrigiensis,* which is said to be a copy of a second century manuscript, omits the extra Cainan from Luke.[7]

Chronogenealogies

Genesis	Age		Genesis	Age	
5:3	130	Adam	11:10	2	Shem(after flood
5:6	105	Seth	11:12	35	Arphaxad
5:9	90	Enosh	11:14	30	Salah
5:12	70	Cainan	11:16	34	Eber
5:15	65	Mahalaleel	11:18	30	Peleg
5:18	162	Jared	11:20	32	Reu
5:21	65	Enoch	11:22	30	Serug
5:25	187	Methuselah	11:24	29	Nahor
5:28	182	Lamech	11:32,12:4	130	Terah
7:6	502	Noah	21:5	100	Abraham
11:10	98	Shem (to flood)	25:26	60	Isaac
			47:28	130	Jacob (to Egypt)
	1656 years			642 years	

Nimrod. Gen.10:9

The next period is from The Flood to Jacob entering Egypt, a period of some 642 years; the only time periods needing explanation here is Noah's age at begetting (1), and Terah's age when he begat Abraham (2).

1. There is the unusual circumstance of Noah having his three boys so late in life; in fact, hundreds of years later than anyone else. Did Noah waited 500 years to have any children? No one else did.

Jameison says, “He began to beget; God in mercy denying him children till that time, that he might not beget them to the destroyer, that he might have no more than should be saved in the ark; **or, having before that time begotten others who were now dead**, and having the approaching flood in his view, he began again to beget a seminary for the world.”[7a]

Being we only have the information of his three sons, I think we have to go with that, but Noah may have had daughters before his 3 sons. They naturally got married, moved away, and were not part of his family anymore, or made it into the ark.

2.Abraham and his father left their country to go to Canaan, and Terah died in between in Haran. Gen 11:32 tells us Terah was 205 years old when he died in Haran, and Gen.12:4 says Abraham was 75 when he left Haran; therefore, if Abram left Haran when his father died as a sequential reading would suggest, Terah was 130 when Abram was born.

However, critics say that the wording in both Gen 12:4 and acts 7:4 allow for Abram to leave Haran before his father’s death and come back 60 years later to Haran to bury his father’s body. Therefore, Terah could have been anywhere between 70 and 130 when Abram was born. However, it would be inconsistent to be so minute in chronological information throughout and leave this generation without a solution.

Some say Terah had triplets when he was 70, because Gen. 11:26 says, “And Terah lived 70 years and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.”° However, this verse is in the same form as Gen. 5:32: "And Noah was 500 years old, and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.” (and they were not triplets; see Gen. 10:21 in the Hebrew, “Japheth, the elder”) Which phrases are obviously saying that at a certain age, the patriarch began bearing sons, the first named one being the prominent one (the one leading to Christ).

The NIV in Gen.10:21 reads, “Shem, the elder brother of Japheth” instead of "Shem...the brother of Japheth the elder, “but this is not based on the Hebrew Mass. text, but on the LXX translation. Henry Morris comments, "Shem was born 97 years before the flood (cp Gen.5:32 & 11:10) whereas Noah begat the first of his 3 sons 100 yrs. before the flood (Gen.5:32 with 7:11)." [8] Some make Terah beget Abram at 70 or even have triplets at age 70 and die at 145. Making Abram born when Terah was 70 changes the straight-forward reading of the text; namely, that it is just after Terah's death at 205 years that Abram receives the call at age 75 to leave Haran.

Note that Abram's brother dies before his father Terah. If Abram's brother Haran was born when Terah was 70 and Terah lives to be 205, He would die at something less than 135 yrs old; but if Terah dies younger at 145 (as in the Sam.), his son would have died unreasonably young (less than 70).

Enoch’s prophesy Jude 1:14

Thomas states, “The solution to the so-called "conflict" of chronology data about Terah and Abraham, as recorded in Genesis (11:26;11:32; and 12:4), in comparison with information preached by Stephen in Acts (7:4) is resolvable by recognizing two main points:

1. Abraham left Haran while his father Terah was still alive, and returned later to retrieve Terah's body (after Terah was dead, of course!), in order to bury Terah's body in Canaan, probably in the same basic burial grounds which Abraham had purchase for burying Sarah's body (i.e., in the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite);

2. Luke's record of Stephen's final sermon—before Stephen was stoned to death—includes Stephen's narrative description of least three persons who were involved in Abraham's trek from Ur to Haran to Canaan—i.e., *God* was involved; *Terah* was involved; and *Abraham* was involved; so the "problem passage" portion of Acts 7:4 is only a problem if the sequentially ambiguous usages of the English pronouns "he" and "him" are taken to mean, respectively, "God" and "Abraham"—

However, if the "he" and "him" respectively mean "Abraham" and "Terah," there is no chronological conflict with Genesis' data regarding the correlated life-spans of Terah and Abraham (see Genesis 11:26; 11:32; and 12:4)."

The word translated "elder" is "gadol" the common word for "greater." Many translators have translated this as "elder" here and 8 other places because the context is referring to someone older, but not "old" in which case "zaqen" would be used. Some have argued 'greater" should be used here, but it is the same wording that we see with Leah and Rachel, Merab and Michal, elder and younger, Ezek. 16:46; Gen 29:16; 1 Sam 18:17, etc.[9]

Henry B.Smith adds, " Ancient Jewish interpreters believed that Terah's age of 70 at Abram's birth created a dilemma. Since Abram left Haran for Canaan at age 75, Terah was 145 years old at that time. Since Terah died at the age of 205, he was left abandoned by Abram for 60 years. Ancient Jewish commentators thought this was unthinkable, so they came up with a variety of inventive solutions for this infamous problem…

Terah's 145-year lifespan in the SP is certainly a deliberate 60-year deflation designed to solve this chronological "problem." An SP scribe(s) could not accept the idea that Abraham would have left his father Terah behind in Haran for 60 years until his death, so he reduced Terah's lifespan from 205 to 145 years. The MT and LXX both independently preserve Terah's original lifespan of 205 years."[9a]

Some feel that we can extrapolate from these unique statements in Gen. 11:26 & 5:32, which occur at the end of each genealogical account, and reinterpret all the genealogical statements in Gen. 5 and 11 in a non-continuous way. In other words, when it says in Gen. 11:12, "And Salah lived 30 years, and begat Eber..." it just means, "Salah began begetting at 30 years, Eber being the most prominent one."

This is an unwarranted reading into the text. Gen. 5:32 and 11:26 are in a different form than the other genealogies, and in both cases of Gen 5:32 and 11:26, we know the dates the prominent heirs (Shem and Abram) were born from other verses (11:10,32;12:4). We have no scriptural grounds to think that the plain reading, e.g.; "And Serug lived 30 years and begat Nahor," is not the true reading. Rewording Gen. 11 like this would only add hundreds of years to the chronology anyway, so why would anyone resort to this?

In the past BC, there was a desire to add extra time here so as to somewhat correlate the Bible's chronology with Egyptian chronology (see Manetho, LXX, Sam.). More recently, the motive seems to be to correlate some archaeological datings with the Bible's chronology. "One of the most widely accepted principles of interpretation ...is that the author's intended meaning is the correct meaning of the text. How does one know the author's intended meaning? His meaning normally is the most obvious sense of his statements as determined by his target audience. Throughout Jewish and church history up until the time of Lyell and Darwin, virtually all believers, the target audience, understood Genesis 5 & 11 as continuous genealogies which recorded a name from every generation between Adam and Abraham and the number of years between those generations. To change the wording of the formula from, "When x had lived y years, he became the father of z to "When x had lived y years he begat someone in the line of descent that led to z, changes the author's intended meaning and constitutes a major violation of a well-established hermeneutical principle."[10]

Green states, "Is there not however, a peculiarity in the construction of these genealogies which forbid our applying to them an inference drawn from others not so constructed? The fact that each member of the series is said to have begotten the one next succeeding, is in the light of the wide use of this term which we have discovered in other cases, no evidence of itself that links have not been omitted.

But do not the chronological statements introduced into these genealogies oblige us to regard them as necessarily continuous? Why should the author be so particular to state, in every case, with unfailing regularity, the age of each patriarch at the birth of his son, unless it was his desiring thus to construct a chronology of this entire period, and to afford his readers the necessary elements for a computation of the interval from the creation to the deluge to Abraham? And if this was his design, he must of course have aimed to make his list complete. The omission of even a single name would create an error."[11]

Hardy comments: "When a biblical author says a person was X years old when something happened, if we do not take that as a historical statement we quickly get to the point where words have no meaning."[11a]

Some even try to justify genealogical gaps in Gen.5&11 because of the circumstance that the Massoretes have single letters used as separators between sections of scripture, possibly indicating paragraphs. Small breaks are supposedly indicated by the Hebrew letter "s" and larger breaks by the letter "p." There are 8 s breaks between the 32 verses of chapter 5. These separators here are proposed to indicate also breaks/gaps between the patriarch's dominions, thus not treating the text as one continuous record. Jude 14 settles this error by stating that Enoch was the 7th from Adam: Gen.5:1-18. Therefore, simply adding the years stated in Genesis 5 & 11 is correct, and this makes 1656 years until Noah's flood.

There is also the opinion that because Joshua 24:15 speaks of Abraham's forefathers "beyond the river" as idolaters, that Noah and Shem could not have been living just before Abram's time, as it is supposed that they did not likely become idolaters.[12] However, if one looks at the context, verse 2 states, "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the river in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor (Serug)." Only Terah and Serug are specifically called idolaters before Abraham's time; why didn't verse 2 include Abram?[13] It is an assumption that because Abram grew up in Terah's home, that he too was an idolater; but as Abram took his father with him when God commanded him to move, it would seem Terah too was a believer by that time. (and we know not what Abram believed before; he could have followed his great grand-dad Shem, who was alive then, and presumably not an idolater). Shem lived to be 600 years old, and would have died just 5 years before Abraham died at 175.

God later spoke to Noah and he began preaching the end was coming and probably began building the ark 60-70 years before the flood.[14] (Heb.11:7,1Peter 3:20). Prior to the flood, God had said (to the angels?) in Gen.6:3 that man's days would be another 120 years until judgement. [14a]

The beginning of nations would properly begin at the time of the dispersion at Babel. The date for Babel is determined by the statement about Peleg, who was born 101 years after the Deluge. He was named "Peleg" which means, "division", for according to Gen. 10:25, "for in his days the earth was divided." This scattering from Babel due to the confusion of languages, which is now related, therefore likely began soon after the day of his birth, wherefore his parents named him "Peleg." "Therefore, is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." Gen.11:9

H. Morris adds, "Nimrod, as Noah's great-grandson through Ham, was in the same generation as Eber, Noah's great-grandson through Shem. Thus, it is reasonable to infer that the division at Babel took place when both Nimrod and Eber were mature men.

If Peleg was born soon after the dispersion, it is not surprising that Eber would commemorate such a momentous event in the name of his son. Otherwise, it is difficult to understand why the writer would take the trouble to note the meaning of "Peleg" since this was not done in the case of the other names in the Table of Nations." [15]

Note also, when it says in Gen. 5:3: "Adam lived 130 years and begat a son;" this does not mean that he bore his son on his birthday. Therefore, he could have been 130 yrs + 0 days or 130 years and 364 days old when he begat his son. Over a number of generations, this would average out to a short count of ½ year for each generation listed. 22 generations are chronicled in Genesis until Egypt. (After that, every date is determined by length of reign or lump sum amounts). Thus, the creation date would actually be 11 years further B.C., and the flood date would be 6 years back (12 generations flood to Egypt).

Table of Nations (Gen.10, abbreviated list)[16]

Japeth	Greece
Gomer	Crimean
Magog Meshech,Tubal	Russia
Madai	Medes, Persians (Iran), India
Javan	Greece
Tiras	Thracians
Cush	Ethiopia, Sudan
Seba	Sudan
Ashkenaz	Germany, Scandinavia
Togarmah	Armenia
Nimrod	Babylon, Assyria (marginal reading of vs. 11 has "Nimrod", not Asshur),
Sumer, Iraq)	
Mizraim	Egypt (Arabic:Mizr, also called the land of Ham Ps105:23-27)
Canaan	Canaanites (vss.15-19)
Sidon	Phoenicians
Heth	Hittites
Put	Libya
Elam	region S. of Syria, E. of Iran
Aram	Syrians
Eber	Hebrews

“By these were the isles of the gentiles divided in their lands, every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations…These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations, and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood." Gen. 10:5,32. Easton adds, “In general, it may be said that the descendants of Japheth were scattered over the North, those of Shem over the central regions, and those of Ham over the extreme South.” [17]

Gen. 6:3 states, "And the LORD said, ‘My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.’" As we see from the chronogenealogies, mankind's lifespan did not go down to 120 years after the flood; so this refers to the time from God pronouncing judgment on mankind to the flood year (no doubt through Noah "a preacher of righteousness" -2 Peter 2:5).

As far as the duration of the flood itself Gen. 7:24-8:4 states, "And the waters prevailed upon the earth 150 days...and after the end of 150 days, the waters were abated and the ark rested in the 17th month on the 17th day of the month upon the mountains of Ararat."

Note this does not say it landed on Mt Ararat itself, but the mountain range. Because Mt Ararat was likely formed later, it has been stated the ark probably landed elsewhere. Dr. Timothy Clarey (geologist) believes colliding tectonic plates on day 150 produced the first of these mountains, a hundred-mile stretch called the Kagizman Ridge which is 50-150 miles due west of Mt Ararat.

"These...strata allow us to work out the relative timing of the volcanism in the area. What is today labeled Mt Ararat was part of a later and final pulse of volcanism, much of which sits atop the earlier volcanic rocks of the Erzurum-Kars Plateau. Most of the eruptive activity at the current Mt. Ararat was after the flood during the ensuing ice age. It appears the Ark could not have landed there since it probably didn't exist then, at least not to any large extent."[18]

It also states they were in the ark for one year. Gen.7:11 states, "In the 600th year of Noah's life in the 2nd month the 17th day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up and the windows of heaven were opened," and says in Gen. 8:13 "And it came to pass in the 601st year in the first month the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth; and Noah removed the covering from off the ark and looked and behold, the face of the ground was dry. And in the 2nd month on the 27th day of the month was the earth dried...and Noah went forth..."

The founding of nations

From Noah's flood to Babel:

Gen 11:1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

Gen 11:2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.

Gen 11:3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for morter.

Gen 11:4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

Gen 11:5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

Gen 11:6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

Gen 11:7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

Gen 11:8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

Gen 11:9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

Gen 11:10 These *are* the generations of Shem: Shem *was* an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood:

Gen 11:11 And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11:12 And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah:

Gen 11:13 And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11:14 And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber:

Gen 11:15 And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11:16 And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg:

Gen 11:17 And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters

Gen 11:18 And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu:

Gen 11:19 And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen_10:25 And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one *was* Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided, and his brother's name *was* Joktan.

First Nations

The context of the scattering of people from Babel makes certain the meaning of the verse, namely, the division of peoples, not continent making as some have said; but some question the exact time of this division. Peleg means "division."[1] It comes from the verb "palag"in the same verse, Gen.10:25, translated "divided."[2] (see also the other 2 times it is used: 'Pelag' in Dan.2:41,7:25).

Now, giving one of his sons a name at birth as the one in whose days the earth was divided, as opposed to the days of his brother, implies that his birth year was the time of the division. Unless one makes Eber's naming of his first son, 'Peleg,'prophetic, and Joktan born later than his brother's "days;" otherwise how could the text read, "in his(and not his brother's)days was the earth divided." The text would have read, "in their days the earth was divided." Note that Peleg lived for 239 years. It is rather meaningless to say that anytime in his lifespan, the scattering from Babel occurred.

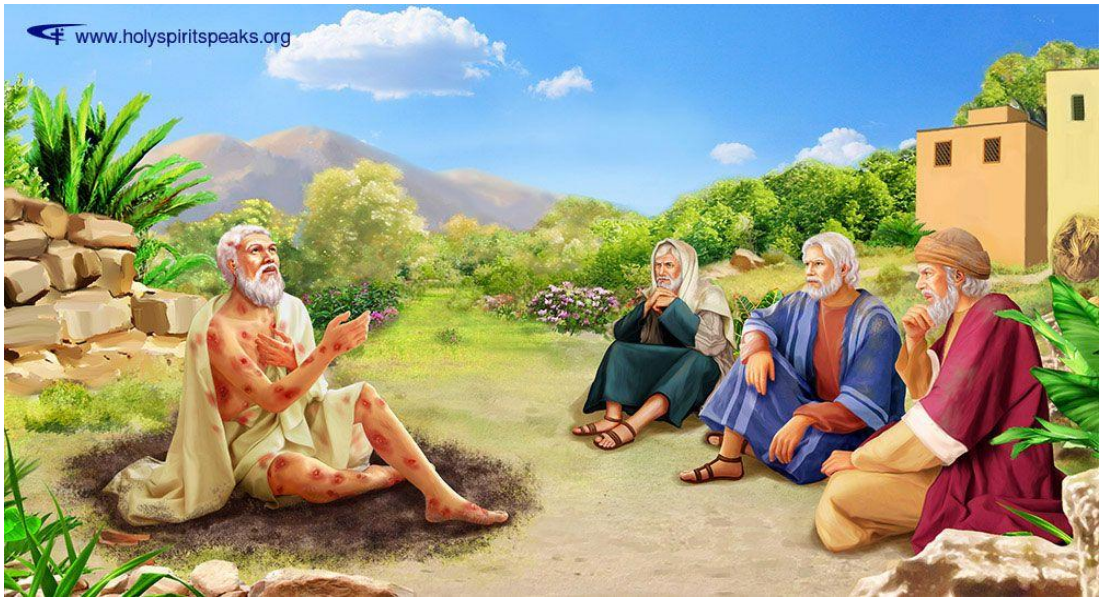
Egypt:

Gen 10:1 Now these *are* the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.Gen 10:6 And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.Gen 10:13 And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, Gen 10:14 And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim. Gen 10:20 These *are* the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, *and* in their nations.

Gen. 10:32 These *are* the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

So we see from Gen.10 and 11, that the first nations were founded by Noah's grandsons and great-grandsons. And this began just after the tower of Babel incident, 101 years after Noah and his sons left the Ark. Mizraim, also called Mizr, Misor,or Menes, was the first king of Egypt, and so named in all the king's lists we have.[3] He is said to have built the city of Memphis. We note there were 3 generations of grown men and women at the time of Babel. (not counting Noah's family) Gen.11:10-16. So the start of every ancient nation was about at the same point in history; not much over a century after the date we find for Noah's flood.

JOB

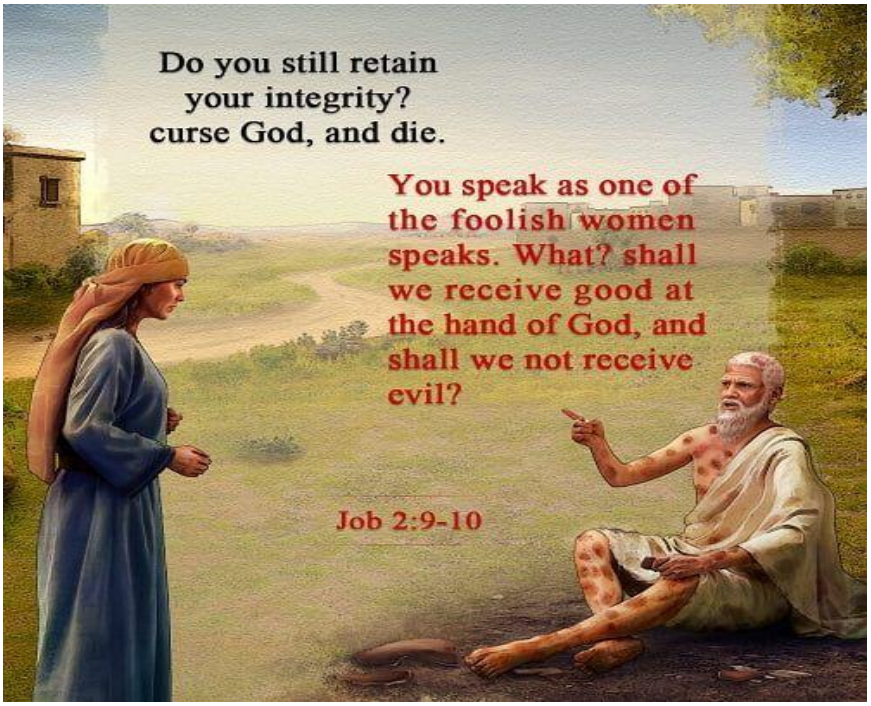


This is probably the right time to mention Job, as the bible indicates he lived at the end of the accounts in Genesis. Though we don't know who wrote it, as it includes a note on his death, it was written after he lived. The Talmud says Moses wrote it, but even though that is just tradition, being he wrote Genesis, I think this likely, though the material may have come to him when he lived in Midian. Moreover, from the lifespan of Job we can determine when he lived. As people's lifespans were still decreasing at a steady rate since Noah's flood, and Job lives after his story another 140 years, and he was a mature man with grown family at the start, he probably lived to be about 190-200 years old. This places him at only one period of history, the time of the Patriarchs. Job 42:16,17 says, "After this lived Job 140 years and saw his sons and his son's sons, even four generations. So, Job died being old and full of days."

The evidence is straight-forward. We need only count the generations in the family tree for Job's contemporary Elihu (though he was younger than Job), and compare them to the Jewish records. Nahor-Buz-Barachel-Elihu = Abram- Isaac-Jacob-Judah (Gen. 22:20-3, Job 32:6). That would place the events of Job's trials about the time of Jacob's later sojourn in Canaan or Joseph's rule in Egypt.

As to the location, Job 1:1 states that Job is "a man from the land of Uz." One Uz is a grandson of Shem in Gen.10:23; another Uz is a grand son of Esau (36:28). Lam.4:21 says, "Oh daughter of Edom that dwells in the land of Uz; so this likely corresponds to Shem's Uz."

One further note: As stated earlier, Job was already a mature man with a wife who together had a grown family at the start of his trial, and afterward has 10 more children to replace those he lost; so I think it safe to assume that his wife, who told him to curse God and die, died herself, and Job got a new and younger wife with whom he had 10 more children.


Do you still retain your integrity? curse God, and die.
You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?
Job 2:9-10

The other question in Job's chronology is "How long did his trials last?" Job was tested twice: Job 1:6 states: Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. **Job 2:1** Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

So the question is how long between these trials. We know the trials themselves were immediate. Job 1: 13-19 says,

"And there was a day when his sons and his daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: And the Sabeans fell *upon them,* and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house. And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee." So we see that these trials were simultaneous or immediately following each other on the same day.

According to Gill, "The Targum says, it was on the day of the great judgment, and which, as in Job_1:6; was at the beginning of the year; so that according to this, and other Jewish writers, there was a whole year between this and the former meeting, and so between the first and second trial of Job; but this is not likely, since Satan would never give him so much breathing time; nor can it be thought that Job's friends should stay so long before they paid him a visit, which was not till after this day."[1]

Job loses everything

I believe that the bible gives us a clues. Ex.34:21 says, “six days shall work be done," as a pattern for man after God's 6 days of work at creation. So, it's possible His angels work for a week and give an account to Him at the end of each week; the work week pattern being in heaven also. However, Rev.12:10 says that Satan, “the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night"(cast down in future period).

If he accuses us day and night, is it not possible that he and the angels come before God every day to give an account? However, the wording in ch.2:1, "Again there was a day," implies a longer time; otherwise it would read, "the next day." From my experience working independently for a boss, I gave account weekly. Gill adds, "as the host of heaven, in which posture Micaiah saw them in vision, 1Ki_22:19, so they may be said to go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth into the several parts of all the world, to do the will and work of God assigned them, Zec_6:5 and then, having done their work, return again, and present themselves before the Lord, to give an account of what they have done, and to receive fresh orders from him, being ready to do his pleasure in everything he shall command them."[2]

After these trials, his friends visit him: Job 2:11-13 says, Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.

And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that *his* grief was very great."

"And it was *so,* that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is* right, as my servant Job *hath.*

Job

Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you *after your* folly, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is* right, like my servant Job.

So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite *and* Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job. And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold." Job 42:11

I think it logical to give them a week to make an appointment and come. It was a week to mourn with him before they spoke, and there seems to be no gap in their speeches once they start talking; and when they are done, God comes in a whirlwind and speaks audibly to Job and his friends. Then they offer up burnt offerings and Job gets healed. Then his other extended family and acquaintances come and give him gifts. So, from start to finish Job's trials, though severe, probably only lasted a few weeks.

"And the Lord turned the captivity of Job"
Job 42:10

Jacob and Joseph

Jacob's chronology is exceeding complex, and the whole story not needed to complete the timeline; nevertheless, it is included because it is intriguing. Jacob is born when Isaac is 60 and moves to Egypt at 130. That's all one needs to know to do an unbroken timeline. So although it does not affect the overall timeline, it should be noted that there are numerous problems with a straight-forward reading of the details of Jacob's chronology; not the least of which is his being sent away by his mother to look for a wife at age 77.

As one can see from Gen. 30:25,31:41,41:45-6,46-7,47:9, Joseph is 39 when Jacob is 130. So, Jacob is 91 at Joseph's birth. Rachel seemingly bears Joseph 7 years after marriage, therefore it appears 77 years pass from Jacobs birth until he leaves his parents to look for a wife, and doesn't marry Rachel until he is 84, and during this 7 year period with his 2 wives and 2 concubines has all the boys (11 boys and 1 girl) except Benjamin and Jacob's other daughters (37:35) and granddaughters(46:7). However, this scenario works well with Rachel's age. If she is 17 when she meets Jacob and 24 when they marry, she is 31 with Joseph and likely dies at 49 bearing Benjamin. The other scenarios make her in her 60s bearing Benjamin; a bit unlikely. Here is the straight-forward timeline:

Jacob's age	Rachel's age	Event
60	0	Rachel's birth
77	17	they meet
84	24	they marry
91	31	Joseph born
97	37	Leave Laban
109?	49?	Benjamin born
130		Jacob to Egypt

Here are the problems with the straightforward timeline. First, many have wondered, "**How could Leah have borne 7 children while also having a barren period in which her handmaid bore two children, all in 7 years?**"(Gen.30:9-13) Add to this the fact that Simeon and Levi are grown men who avenge their sister (34;7,25) before Benjamin is born (35:18);(Benjamin seems to have been born about a year or so after Joseph is sold at age 17).

Benjamin *seemingly* has 10 children coming into Egypt. However, note that his brothers still call Benjamin a "Lad" when he comes into Egypt. the term "lad" is always used for child or teen or possibly just “youth.” The only way around this is to have his children born after he came to Egypt, which does not line up with the numbers listed in his family in Gen.46 coming into Egypt (though the number is different in Acts 7). This still makes Jacob 109 at Benjamin's birth. Even though he lives to be 147, this birth would require a miracle, even as it did for Abraham[1].

Jones, who agrees with Ussher, tries to explain it: "The few days of Gen.29:20 could have been the month of v.14, and the contract could have been made at the beginning of these 30 days. Verse 15 implies that Jacob had already been working or serving Laban to earn his sheep."[2] However, *only* if verse 20 were put after verse 28, could the account be understood as Jacob marrying both wives his first year with Laban. Since Jacob's time with Laban (Gen.30) puts an end to bearing all his sons except Benjamin and fixes Joseph's birth at the end of the 2nd 7 years of service, (30:25), the only way to add more time here is with another 20 year period (and from a *prima facie* reading of the childbearing in Gen.29&30, it would *seem* at least 10 years occur between Judah and Joseph).

Gen. 47:9,28 has Jacob at 130 when Joseph is 39, and Joseph is seemingly born at the end of Jacob's 14-year contract with Laban (though he served 6 more). Another difficulty with only one 20-year period lies in establishing the date of the birth of Joseph. in relation to his brother's ages. The scriptures seem clear enough, but according to a straightforward reading of Genesis 29-31, Jacob's 4th son, Judah, is only 3 years older than Joseph, yet when Judah is 20 ("at that time" Joseph is 17 and sold into Egypt: Gen.37:2,38:1), he marries; then has 3 boys who grow up, Pharez, Zareh and Shelah.

Pharez and Zareh die, then the younger boy grows up, and "in the process of time" his wife dies (Gen.38:1,12), and Judah has a child by his daughter-in-law (who becomes pregnant in Timnath, Gen.38,46:12). Then there is 2 years of famine, all before they move to Egypt; which is only 22 years after he marries, if he indeed is only 3 years older than Joseph! From Gen.38, can one see Judah doing all these things; then at 35 going to Egypt? Judah seems to have been much older than Joseph.

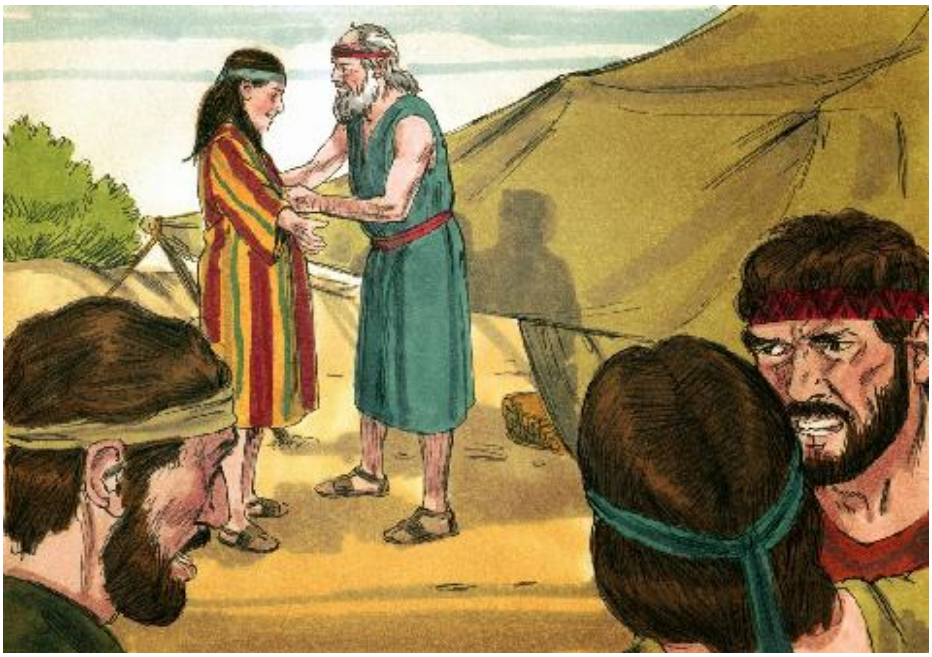
In addition, "Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field and gave them to his mother, Leah."(30:14) when he is only 6 or 7 years old. Since Joseph's chronology is tight, the only way to make logical sense of this is to have Joseph's brothers born earlier.

In fact, Bishop Ussher does just that in his chronology[3], having Leah marry Jacob immediately when he comes to Syria, which indeed fits somewhat better with the sequence and amount of childbearing in Gen. 29 and 30. This would add 7 years to Judah's age in Gen. 38 and Reuben's age in Gen.30 and Levi's age when he entered Egypt.

The problem with this solution is that it is not consistent with the account of Jacob waiting 7 years for his bride and then being tricked and getting Leah. Gen. 29:20-21: **"And Jacob served 7 years for Rachel; and they seemed to him but a few days for the love he had to her.** And Jacob said to Laban, 'Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.' Those who propose, as Bishop Ussher does, that Jacob was not 77, but 70 when leaving home, have a problem with the missing years.

In contrast, those who propose there were **2 twenty-year periods** have plenty of time for childbearing and also have a biblically sound solution. The 2 twenty-year periods are postulated in Gen. 31:38 and 31:41, taking them as two separate 20-year periods, instead of one.

This is an attractive solution and would solve many chronological problems, beginning with Jacob leaving for Haran at 57 instead of 77. This would have him come to Padan Aram at 57, marry both wives at 64, but still not have Joseph until he was 91, *20+7* years later (finally moving away after 6 more years). From the number of events which transpire in Jacob's life, one would suspect more time involved in child-bearing.



Another point to take into consideration here is that 2 twenty-year periods makes Rachel childless for 27 years before she bears Joseph, then seemingly many years later dies bearing Benjamin (Gen.31-35). But this is not unreasonable considering **longer lifespans then.**(Sarah died at 127, Gen 23:1), and women had their "time of life" later, even as Sarah, who would have required no miracle other than opening her barren womb when she was 65 (at the time of the promise), or even up to 10 years later when she gave Hagar to Abram.

Note she says at that time, "Behold now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing"(Gen 16:2) but later when she is 89, Gen 18:11 says, "it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women." Note how the king of Egypt lusted after her beauty at 65: "she was very fair!" Gen 12:14. So if Rachel meets Jacob at 18, marries at 25, bears Joseph at 45 and Benjamin at about 63 as she dies; that is in no way improbable. In fact, the theory that there must have been 2 twenty-year periods here back to back is taken from **Esau's chronology**. Because they are the same age, if one can place Esau in time with Jacob, the times are settled. And if one can prove from scripture precisely where the missing time is, all debate should cease.

We do know that the statement of Jacob burying his father (Gen. 35:28-29) is chronologically out of place (no doubt because it occurs in the middle of Joseph's account). Although he moved near his father in the Hebron valley and was there when Joseph was 17 (Gen. 35:27; 37:14), Isaac did not die then. Isaac is 180 at his death, making Jacob 120 and Joseph 29 at Isaac's death. The next account (after Isaac's death is noted) is Joseph's, which spans 22 years. As Jacob is 130 when he meets Joseph at 39 (Gen.47:9,28), He must have been 91 at Joseph's birth and 108 when the account of Joseph is given. So he buried Isaac 12 years after Joseph was sold into Egypt.

Two twenty-year periods were first proposed by Adam Clarke in 1810, though earlier in 1765, William Skinner proposed a 40-year period (to replace a supposed copy error for "20"), and lamented the fact that no one could find any biblical proof for this.[4] Clark states, "For upon Laban's pursuit of Jacob he mentions twenty years twice; which two sets of twenty, if really different, make forty. Each mention of the twenty years is introduced with the word זה zeh, which word, when repeated, is used by way of distinction; as when we say, this and that, the one or the other.[5]

Biblical Chronological Studies states, "When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, 'You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;'
And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padanaram;
And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father;
Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife." Gen.28:6-9

Jacob tricks father to get blessing

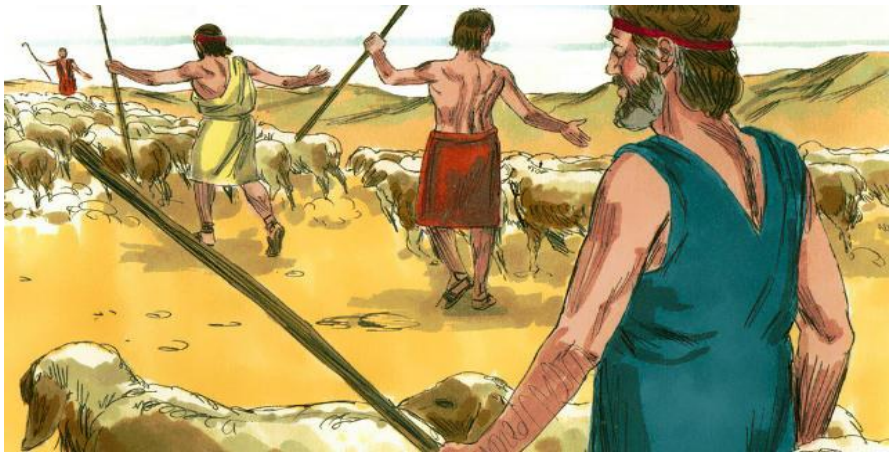
"The verses above give an account of events right after Isaac blesses Jacob. Recall that Jacob, the younger brother of Esau, took the blessing meant for Esau, Jacob's eldest son. As a result, Esau was very angry and had determined to kill his brother in revenge. However, Rebekah learned of Esau's plan and encouraged Jacob to flee to her brother Laban in Haran (Padanaram).

Rebekah also got the support of Jacob's father Isaac by reminding him how unhappy they were with Esau's Canaanite wives (Genesis 26:35), and how it would be better for Jacob to find a wife in the land of Haran instead (Genesis 27:46). Now it was at this time that verse 8 indicates that Esau, possibly in an attempt to regain favor with his father and upon learning that his parents were unhappy with the Canaanite wives he had, decides to go to take a wife of Abraham's son Ishmael, his father's brother.

One might suspect Esau figured if he married into the family of Abraham's descendants, that this would satisfy his parents. In any case, we learn that Esau goes to Ishmael, and arranges to marry Ishmael's daughter Mahalath. So why is this important? First, recall from **Genesis 25:17** that Ishmael lived to be 137 years old. Also, Ishmael was 14 years older than Isaac, being born when Abraham was 86 years old (Genesis 16:16); while Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 years old (Genesis 21:5). Further, we know Jacob and Esau were born to Isaac when he was 60 years old (Genesis 25:26).

From these various ages we can determine that **in the year Ishmael died (at 137 years old), Isaac who was 14 years younger, was 123 years old. And since Jacob and Esau were born when Isaac was 60 years old; then in the year Ishmael died, they would both have been 63 years old. When Jacob left his parents, Esau also left to take another wife. (IF Ishmael was still alive then), this means that the oldest Esau could have been when he went to visit Ishmael to marry his daughter Mahalath was 63 years old** (Gen.28:9), and similarly, the oldest Jacob could have been when he left for Padanaram (Haran) was also 63 years old."[6] Therefore, in this model, there is no way a single 20 year period in Gen.31:38-41 will work. It may be noted that orthodox Jews also make Jacob younger, 63, when he comes to Laban. (Seder Olam)

However, the traditional way to look at this though is to say Ishmael died earlier. Gill states, "**Then went Esau unto Ishmael**,.... Not to Ishmael in person, for he was now dead, Gen_25:17, and had been dead as is reckoned about fourteen years before this, but to the house of Ishmael."[7]



In Genesis chapter 30 we find the entire account of Laban talking Jacob out of leaving Haran following the birth of Joseph, and Jacob agreeing to stay on and work for some of Laban's livestock. But note the statement in Genesis 30:36, where it is noted that Laban separates himself "3 days journey between himself and Jacob".

Now if Jacob is separated 3 days journey from Laban, then he is certainly no longer in Laban's house (Genesis 31:41). And so the 20 years mentioned in Genesis 31:41 cannot include the 6 years in which Jacob lived 3 days journey from Laban. Thus, it appears that there were two separate 20 years periods, one in which Jacob lived in Laban's house (verse 41), and another in which Jacob lived in Haran but outside of Laban's house (verse 38), which included the 6 years in which Jacob lived 3 days journey from Laban. In all likelihood, the 20 years in Haran but outside Laban's house included the 14 years working for Laban's daughters as well as the 6 years working for Laban's livestock. All together this would mean that Jacob was in Haran for a total of 40 years, not just 34 years, and certainly not just 20 years. And so, Jacob would have come to Haran at 57 years old (6 years before Ishmael died), and stayed until 97 years old before returning to Canaan.

It is interesting to note that a fragment among the oldest biblical documents we possess, the Dead Sea scrolls, also makes a comment on Jacob's age. Although this is not a biblical text, the para-biblical chronology of 4Q559 states, "Jacob was sixty-fi(ve year)s old (when he begot Levi)."[8] Levi was Jacob's third son in quick succession, after a 7 year wait to get married; so according to this first c. BC comment, he'd be 55 years old arriving at Laban's house.

Steve Shirley sums the next period up nicely: "After leaving, he headed with his family to Canaan (Gen 31:17-21). He traveled first to Mahanaim (Gen 32:1-2), then to Penuel (Gen 32:30-32), then to Succoth, where he must have stayed for a period of time, building a house and shelters for his cattle (Gen 33:17). After an unspecified amount of time, he left there and moved to Shechem, where he bought land (Gen 33:18-20). After another unspecified period of time, God told Jacob to leave Shechem and move to Bethel in Canaan (Gen 35:1), and they lived there for a period of time (Gen 35:4-15). Then, they left Bethel and traveled towards Ephrath (Gen 35:16). It was during this journey that Rachel gave birth to Benjamin, and unfortunately she died in childbirth (Gen 35:16-20)."[9]

The question also needs to be addressed of who all actually emigrated to Egypt. The list in Genesis has 70 names in the Massoretic text, but 75 in Acts 7:14 (as in LXX of Genesis 46:27). And though only one daughter and one granddaughter of Jacob are listed, vs. 7 says, "his daughters and his sons' daughters." Another problem is that Judah's son, Pharaz would only have been a boy then, yet Pharez's sons are also listed with those who came into Egypt in ch.46:12. To try to avoid this dilemma Morris reasons, "Pharez was still only a boy. The names of his sons are evidently included to point out that so far as Judah's inheritance was to be reckoned, they had taken the place of Er and Onan, who had died in Canaan." [10] So Morris takes the position that the list is not literal; Pharez's sons not actually emigrating, but born later in Egypt. Likewise, the ten sons of Benjamin, Jacob's youngest son, are also listed as coming to Egypt with Jacob. So, did Pharez's sons or Benjamin's offspring come into Egypt or not? (some or all). If the list is not literal in some way, (as lists can be incomplete as in Mt.1) of who actually emigrated to Egypt, this opens the possibility that Benjamin had his kids later in Egypt and was indeed a lad when he met his brother Joseph in Egypt.

Gen. 46:8 states, "**And these are the names of the children of Israel which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons." Moshe Zippor** comments, "An interesting reading which appears in Genesis 46:27 and Exodus 1:5 in the Septuagint mentions "seventy-five persons" (some manuscripts of the Septuagint also give this number in Deut. 10:22). A similar variant appears at Ex. 1:5 in a Hebrew manuscript from Qumran. Genesis 46 in the Septuagint contains several changes in the list of names of those going to Egypt, including some additional names; most are names mentioned in the lists of genealogies in Chronicles (I Chron. 2-5).[7] The Aramaic Targum also mentions the third and fourth generations of Jacob's children, but the total of the names it lists in no way matches the number of "seventy-five persons" mentioned there... Seventy persons" is a typological number, symbolizing a large clan or large community. This can be shown from a number of contexts... Attempts of various scholars to explain the lack of correspondence between the total number mentioned in the Septuagint and the names listed there (including the subtotals) have not been successful."[11]

Joseph

Jamieson states**,** "The genealogy was constructed...not that of naming only those members of Jacob's family who were native to Canaan, but of enumerating those who at the time of the immigration to Egypt, and during the partriarch's lifetime, were the recognized heads of families in Israel; though some of them, born after their departure from canaan, could be said to have come into Egypt only in the persons of their fathers."[11]

Concerning Benjamin's large family, Jamieson adds, "But without dwelling on the prima fascia improbability of Benjamin, the youngest son of Jacob, having a more numerous household than any of his brethren, all the statements made respecting him- such as that he was "a little one"(Gen.44:20), that he was born after Joseph's abduction; for Jacob related the incidents to Joseph as new intelligence (ch 48:7), and that he was still a young man over whom his father exercised a parental control (Ch. 42:38-43:13), militates against the likelihood of his having become, before the emigration to Egypt, the father of so many sons. He was at the farthest about 22 years of age (sic: 39-17), and probably under it. Accordingly, a careful inspection will lead to the discovery that in this list of his sons are included grandsons and a great grandson too. The first 3 were Benjamin's own sons: Belah or Bela, Becher, and Ashbel or Jediael (Num.26:38; 1 Chr.7:6;8:1). Gera, Naaman, and Ard or Addar were sons of Bela, Ehi,or Ahiram (Num.26:38) or Abarah (1 Chr.7:1)."[12]

As stated, Jamieson assumes that Benjamin was not born until Joseph left Hebron; so we must address this question. There was no mention of him in the story of Joseph going to see his brothers earlier when he was sold, so he either wasn't born or was a toddler at most. And Joseph's dream,which was some unknown time before he was sold, does have his father and mother bow to him (symbolically). Jacob implies Rachel is still alive at that time: "Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" Gen. 37:10 But as she dies before they move to Hebron (Gen.35:19), this is impossible; so scholars believe Rachel's handmaid Leah became his "mother" after her death.

There is also the comment by Judah to Joseph in Egypt: "We have a father, and old man, and a child of his old age; a little one, and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother; and his father loves him."Gen.44:20. Joseph had been in Egypt 22 years at that time, so how could Ben be a child?

One problem is: Isaac's death, though recorded earlier, occurs during Joseph's story. In Gen.35, Jacob moves to Bethel, to Bethlehem where Benjamin is born, to Edar (a "suburb" of Bethlehem), then 20m. to Hebron where later, Isaac dies. Then in ch. 37, Joseph's story begins when he is 17 (ch.37:14); when he is living in Hebron. However, we know Isaac was alive then, for Joseph was 29 and had been in prison in Egypt for 12 years when Isaac died(120-91). Jacob was 120 then.

The question becomes how much time passed from Rachel's death/Benjamin's birth in Bethlehem to Jacob's move to Hebron. Rachel dies in Bethlehem; then Jacob moves to Edar before getting to Hebron. How much time did Jacob spend in Edar before arriving in Hebron with Joseph and Benjamin? (Gen.35:21). Being it is so close, probably not long: he was probably anxious to see his elderly father. Joseph is born when Jacob was 91, six years prior to leaving Laban. Jacob (97) travels through Canaan stopping at various places; finally reaching Hebron sometime after Benjamin is born (in Bethlehem). Jacob was 108 when Joseph was sold from Dothan when living with his father in the plains outside Hebron (ch.37:14), and Jacob continued living there until he went to Egypt at 130. Dnipe comments, "But being we don't know when he moved to Hebron , no chronological case can be made for precisely when Benjamin was born. In any case, Benjamin was born and Rachel died before Jacob moving to Hebron; not in Hebron; so he couldn't be born after Joseph was sold from Hebron, although Jacob settled in that whole area.[13]

Leupold says, "Shekem belonged to Jacob; part of it by purchase, and the rest by conquest."[14] Gen.33:19. Jacob's flocks were in Shechem 60 miles away when he sent Joseph from Jacob's home in the vale of Hebron to his brothers, and was sold from (12 mi. N of Shechem) Dothan. As Benjamin is not mentioned in Joseph's story, he must have been very young, perhaps a toddler. Also, there is no mention of Rachel grieving for Joseph, as would be expected if she were alive then.

Joseph's account in Egypt occurs next.
Joseph is 17 when he is sold into Egypt. He is in prison for 13 years where he interprets the visions of the baker and cup-bearer, eventually getting him an audience before Pharaoh where he interprets his dream. His dream concerns 7 years of plenty followed by 7 years of famine.
Joseph is promoted to #2 ruler in Egypt, and buys the land, cattle, and money for
Pharaoh in exchange for corn and bread. As the years of plenty are bountiful, he stores much of the crops during the good years, and distributes them during the famine.

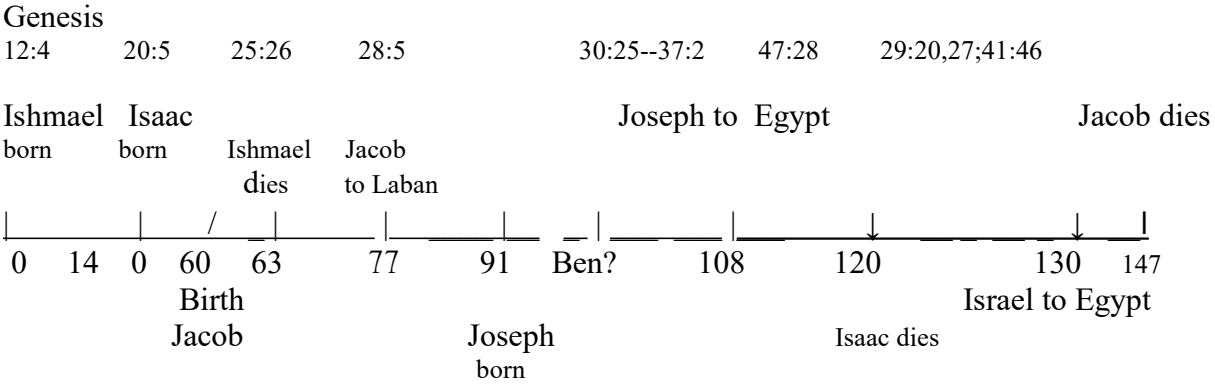
Gen.41:49 states: "And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much until he left numbering, for it was without number." After 7 years of plenty and 2 of famine, Jacob moves to Egypt at age 130, Joseph 39 then. Jacob eventually dies in Egypt at age 147.

Gen 42:13-15 states: "And they said, Thy servants *are* twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest *is* this day with our father, and one *is* not. And Joseph said unto them, That *is it* that I spake unto you, saying, Ye *are* spies: Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither." the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest *is* this day with our father, and one *is* not. And Joseph said unto them, That *is it* that I spake unto you, saying, Ye *are* spies: Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither."

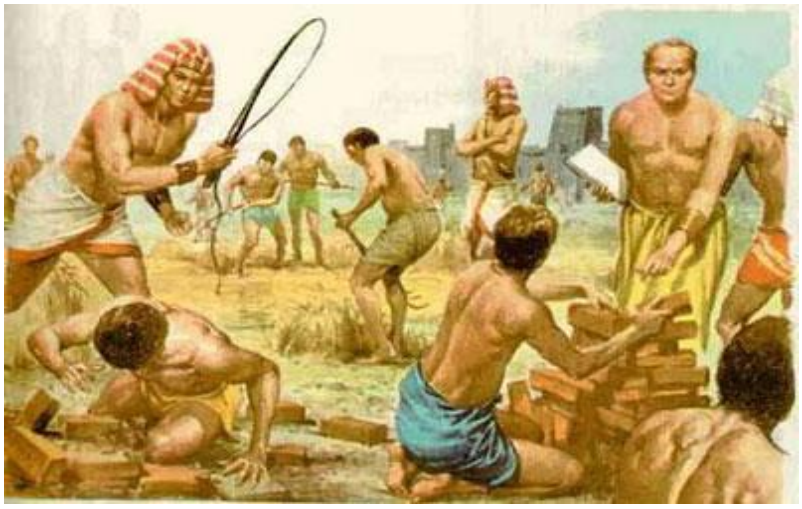
As to any extra-biblical references to Joseph, some think he was the vizier/treasurer to Pharaoh Sesostris 1, named Mentuhotep. As you can see, he has a tablet in his lap. His reign is conventionally dated at 1971 or 1928BC ±76yrs. In Gen 41:40, Pharaoh says, "You shall be over my house, and according to your word all my people shall be ruled; only in the throne will I be greater than you."

It is recorded in Gen. 47:20: "And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for the Egyptians sold every man his field because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's." Mentuhotep was the only recorded vizier to have that much authority. James Breasted wrote, "...he also held the office of chief treasurer, as did the powerful vizier Mentuhotep under Sesostris I, the account which he could give of himself . .. read like the declaration of the king's power." [15]

Joseph dies at 110 years old, 71 years after Israel emigrates to Egypt. (Gen. 50:26). It is stated that Joseph was buried in a coffin in Egypt; but as the Israelites took his bones with them when they left Egypt, if his coffin is discovered, it would be empty. Joseph's reign would likely have been about 80 years until his death. Standard chronlogy:



Israel in Egypt



"Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was 430 years. And it came to pass at the end of the 430 years, on that very same day, it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." (Ex. 12:40-41, NKJV). This is from the Massoretic copy which dates from the ninth century.

And this is from the Dead Sea scroll dated from the first century BC to mid first century AD: "Now the time that the children of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred thirty years. At the end of four hundred thirty years, to the day, all of Yahweh's armies went out from the land of Egypt."[1]

The subject of the amount of time Israel spent in Egypt has been a matter of disagreement since the time of the emendation to Ex. 12:40 in the Samaritan Pentateuch, which Smith says, is "an interpolation of very late date indeed"[2]. While a straightforward reading of Exodus 12:40 has 430 years, many opt for a 215-year time span for Israel's stay in Egypt, beginning the 430 years with God's call to Abraham when he was 75. The popularity of the 215-year chronology stems from the influence of the Rabbins, the LXX (especially the Vaticanus MS), Ussher and Josephus, besides the Samaritan Pentateuch and some renderings of Gal.3:17. In Ex.12:40, the oldest LXX translation containing this verse (c.350AD copy) has, "Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in the land of Egypt *and in Cainan* was 430 years." The Sam. has "Now the sojourn of the children of Israel *and their fathers* who lived in the *land of Cainan and in the* land of Egypt was 430 years."

A literal reading of this verse in Hebrew (Massoretic text) is: "The sojourning of the children of Israel which they sojourned in Egypt." Jamieson says, "The plain import of the present Hebrew text is, that the Israelites remained in Egypt, as a tribe or people, during the period specified. …Through the indirect influence of the LXX, Josephus, and the Rabbins, the truthfulness of whose views has been supposed to be endorsed by Paul (Gal.3:17),

the popular interpretation of this passage is to consider it as embracing the entire period, from the call of Abraham to the exodus:-thus reducing the actual stay of the Israelites in Egypt to 215 years, while the previous half was that passed by the patriarchs in Canaan." (some say 210,220)

Jamieson adds: **the law which was** — *Greek,* "which came into existence four hundred thirty years after" (Exo_12:40-1). He does not, as in the case of "the covenant," add "enacted *by God*" (Joh_1:17). .. It was to Christ in him, as in his grandfather Abraham, and his father Isaac, not to him or them as persons, the promise was spoken.

On the day following (the same Jewish day 6pm to 6pm)the last repetition of the promise orally (Gen_46:1-6), at Beer-sheba, Israel passed into Egypt. It is from the end, not from the beginning of the dispensation of promise, that the interval of four hundred thirty years between it and the law is to be counted.

At Beer-sheba, after the covenant with Abimelech, Abraham called on the everlasting God, and the well was confirmed to him and his seed as an everlasting possession. Here God appeared to Isaac. Here Jacob received the promise of the blessing, for which God had called Abraham out of Ur, repeated for the last time, on the last night of his sojourn in the land of promise."[3]

However, the chronological data in the LXX and Samaritan texts have often been criticized as unreliable. Gleason Archer says, "In the overwhelming majority of cases where the Septuagint is quoted in the NT documents, the Greek rendering is beyond reproach in the matter of accuracy…even where there are noticeable differences in phraseology, there are virtually no examples of quotations from Hebrew passages that would not support the point that the NT author intends to make as he quotes from the OT.

Inasmuch as the Septuagint contains a good many sections that substantially differ from the Hebrew of the Massoretic text, it can only be inferred that the apostolic authors purposely avoided any passages of the Septuagint that perverted the sense of the original." [4]

Especially obvious are the chronological changes translators made to the ages of the patriarchs in Genesis 5 & 11. For example, exactly 100 years are added to 13 of the Patriarchs ages of begetting in the LXX, and exactly 100 years added to 6 of the patriarchs ages of begetting in the Sam. Pentateuch.[5] And the LXX has Methuselah die 14 years after the flood! As for the historian Josephus, even those who quote Josephus as an authority admit "discrepancies which exist between the history of Josephus and that of scripture."[6]

The issue should come down to this: What do the O.T. Hebrew scriptures and majority of Greek N.T. scriptures actually say? It does not always come down to this, largely because of a bias towards the beautifully written and preserved Alexandrian Manuscript, Vaticanus, containing both OT & NT, which was made in the 4th c. and resides in the Pope's library in Rome, referred to often as "oldest and best."

The relevant scriptures are Genesis 15:13,17; Exodus 6:16-20, 12:40; Numbers 3:17-39, 24: 58-59; Psalm 105: 9-12,23; 1 Chron. 16:16-19, Acts 7:6; & Galatians 3:16,17. The Hebrew account in Exodus 12:40 states: "Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years."

Cook stated the position of scholars in his time (1871) when he stated, "If the Hebrew text be taken as it stands, it fixes the duration at 430 years; and this is accepted by the majority of critics of all schools. It agrees substantially with Gen. 15:13,14 when the announcement was first made to Abraham, "know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them 400 years; and also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterwards shall they come out with great substance."

1. And all the waters in the river were turned to blood. And the fish in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river. And there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. Ex.7:20,21

"The expressions here used apply to Egypt and not to Canaan, in which the Patriarchs were certainly not made to serve... The correctness of the Hebrew text however has been questioned. The LXX according to the Vatican codex inserts after Egypt, “and in the land of Canaan,” or according to the Alexandrian codex and Coptic version, ed. De Lagarde, “which they and their fathers dwelt in the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan.”

"The Samaritan Pentateuch has 'which they dwelt in the land of Canaan and the land of Egypt.' This is supposed by some to represent a various reading in the original; but the authority of both witnesses is impaired *by the variations which indicate an intention to meet a difficulty*, and by the fact that the most ancient Greek codices omit the words altogether and agree with the Hebrew text".

For this we have the testimony of Theophilus Ant. who states twice, ‘ad Aut’ iii,9,24, that the Israelites sojourned 430 years in Egypt. The Samaritan text, and that of one late Heb. MS which agrees with it, are suspected of interpolation"[7].

There can be no doubt that at an early time, the Jews felt the difficulty of reconciling this statement with the genealogies, which they held to be complete. If Levi was the grandfather of Moses on the mother’s side through Jochebed, and separated only by two descents on the father’s through Kohath and Amram, it is clear that a space of 430 years could not be accounted for. (Ex.6, Num.3): Levi was past middle age when he went into Egypt; Moses was born 80 years before the Exodus.

The difficulty however appears to be insuperable even on the hypothesis that 430 years included the whole interval between Abraham and the Exodus. Isaac was born 25 years after Abraham’s arrival in Canaan; Jacob was born in Isaac’s 60th year and was 130 years old when he entered Egypt. This accounts for 215 years, leaving 215 for the sojourn.

But in order to make out 215 years, it is necessary to assume that Levi was 95 years old when Jochebed was born, and that Jochebed was 85 years old when she became mother of Moses. This is said by one commentator of great weight not to be improbable, but which scenario is more likely?

. *And the river shall bring forth frogs plentifully, which shall go up and come into your house, and into your bedroom, and upon your bed, and into the house of your servants,*

and upon your people, and into your ovens, and into your kneading troughs. And the frogs shall come upon you, and upon your people, and upon all your servants.v8:3-4

Paul J.Ray states: "The name Amram of vs. 20 may be a conflation of the name of the Amram who was the head of one of the third-generation families of Levi, with the name of a later Amram who was the father of Moses and Aaron.[xvi] There was a tendency among the Levites to name their sons after their forefathers (cf. 1 Chr 6:7–13; Lk 1:5, 59–61). Thus, several generations appear to have been telescoped here, with Amram, the father of Moses and Aaron, probably being at least the grandson of the original Amram, if not even a later descendant.[7a]

What do the Jewish scholars have to say? The Jewish Quarterly says, "Yet, rabbinic tradition teaches us that the verse is not to be taken literally because of a seeming contradiction with Genesis 46:8-27 which lists the people who descended to Egypt together with Jacob…The verses in Genesis 46 were not giving an account of all the grandchildren of Jacob who actually came down to Egypt with him. Rather, some of these were born before descending to Egypt while others were born in Egypt. This difficulty led our rabbis to reinterpret Exodus 12:40.

The rabbinic tradition, as cited by Rashi… The actual sojourn in Egypt lasted 210 years. Furthermore, the number given for the offspring of Jacob, 70, "was a distinctive number in the ancient Near East, a symbolic convention adopted by the Torah for certain purposes. It is "understood here to be a typological rather than a literal number…to express the idea of totality." This list includes those born later into the current count in order to arrive at this conceptually significant number.

For example, the deaths of Abraham and Isaac are mentioned in the Torah before they actually took place because the narrative dealing with their persona had ended. Similarly here, the Torah will be focusing on Moses, so the list is simply a means of documenting the next generation without significance as to their place of birth.The passages in Genesis 46 were a listing of Jacob's grandchildren in order to establish the names of the prime families of the Israelites, not an accounting of who was born where."[8]

3. For Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth. And it became lice in man and in beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. Ex.8:17

Many scholars have lamented the Massoretic text for apparently saying that Israel was in Egypt for 430 years, saying this is obviously not true from Moses' genealogy, and they use to wish there were an older MSS that agreed with the LXX and Sam's texts, which have Israel in both Canaan and Egypt during that period of time. Now we have a much older MSS from cave 2 of the dead sea scrolls. But instead of supporting 215 years, it is even more decisive of a 430 year stay in Egypt.

"Now the time that the children of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred thirty years. At the end of four hundred thirty years, to the day, all of Yahweh's armies went out from the land of Egypt." ---Ex.12:40-41 DSS, cave 2, scroll 2Q2 (c.30BC-68AD)[8a]

Williams states,"Whether the longer or shorter period be adopted, it is equally necessary to either assume a succession of miracles or to admit that an indefinite number of links in the genealogies are omitted; a fact for which we have positive evidence in the most important **o**f all genealogies, that of our Lord, and in that of Ezra, which therefore there can be no irreverence in assuming in a case when it clears up every difficulty in the narrative." [9]

Also, it was no doubt noticed at an early date that the 215 years from Abram's call to Israel entering Egypt was exactly half of the 430 years stated for the next period, Israel's stay in Egypt, according to Exodus 12:40.

Gal.3:17 is the supposed NT proof text proponents of the 215-year theory use to bolster their argument. Many versions conveniently render this verse so as to lead one to believe the law **must** have been 430 years after the first giving of the promise.

The key word here is "prokuroo": **to confirm before**. In Gal. 3:16,17 KJV Paul states, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promise*s* made…the covenant that was **confirmed** before (of God, in Christ) the law, which was 430 years after..."

Note that this does not say who the promise was confirmed to; whether Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or all three. As scriptures indicate, it was confirmed at different times to all three. Note especially that both verse 15 and 17 refer to the promise being "**confirmed.**" The bible states that a statement can be confirmed either by frequent repetition or annexing an oath to it.

Psalm 105 speaks specifically of the promise being confirmed to Jacob:
"Which covenant He made with Abraham, and His oath unto Isaac, and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, 'Unto you will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance', when they were but a few men in number, indeed, very few and strangers in it..... Israel also came into Egypt, and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham." Psalms 105: 9-12,23.

Sarfati says, "Gal.3:16 talks about promises (that is: plural) of the land to Abraham and his seed. Galatians seems to be including the other occasions when promises were given (for example, Gen.13:15 and 17:180, not simply considering Gen.15. There is therefore no reason to assume that Paul's 430 year period must begin at the time of Gen.15, rather than at other times of promise."[9a]

The confirmation spoken of in Galatians 3:17 is likely dated from the last repetition of the promise, the culmination of the confirmations, which was given to Jacob at Beersheba the night before he and his sons and their families (the children of Israel) left for Egypt ("I will make of thee a great nation."Gen.46:3, cp.Gen.12:2).

4. And teeming swarms of flies came into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt. The land was destroyed because of the swarms. Ex.8:24

Also, verse 16 speaks of the promises (plural) of the blessings "to Abraham and his seed." ("Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made.") This could include all the recorded times that these promises were given, culminating with the final one at Beersheba, the same day (~6 pm to 6pm) Jacob and his children emigrated to Egypt.

Corson adds, "But the giving of the promise and the covenant and therefore its receipt by Abraham occurred over many years! And afterward it is extended to Isaac, also; then to Jacob. Paul says moreover, that it is the covenant confirmed before in Christ (not Abraham)…As far as the argument of Paul is concerned, the 430 years of Exodus 12 could date from the last divine expression of the Abrahamic promises as well as the first expression."[10]

5. *Behold, the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle which is in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: there shall be a very grievous murrain. Ex.9:3*

Some scholars believe that Paul was expositing from the LXX in Gal.3:17 and so was confirming the 215 year model. That would be even more amazing. If he was, he could easily have made it clear; he could have just said, "the promise" without leaving the door open as to which promise he was referring to. Instead, he says, "the confirmation of the promise." So if he was using the LXX, and if the LXX is wrong here (as it usually is with chronological data; it's various copies even contradicting each other); that means that the Holy Spirit inspired him to write it in such a way as to not confirm the LXX reading even if he believed it!

Jonathan Sarfati adds, "The alleged contradiction is with Exodus 12:40–41, which says that the Egyptian sojourn was 430 years, and this began with Jacob and his 12 sons. You are right that there are no contradictions in Scripture. This one is resolved by understanding the context. That is, that the Abrahamic Covenant did not apply to all descendants of Abraham. God specifically decreed that it would apply only though Isaac and not Ishmael (or Abraham's later children via Keturah). Then He specifically decreed that this promise would apply to Jacob and not Esau. So the Galatians 3:17 is dating from God's reaffirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant through Jacob (renamed Israel) in Genesis 46:1–4)."[10a]

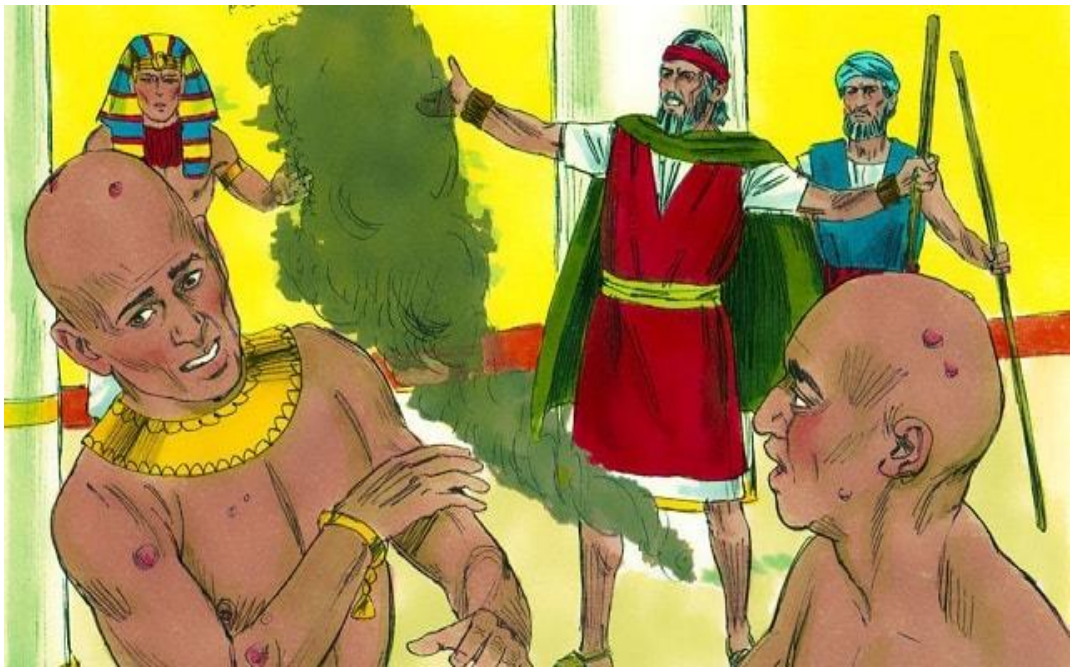
In addition, Genesis 15:13 states that Abraham's "seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them 400 years." (see also Acts 7:6) Abraham's seed does not include Abraham, so that those who hold to the 215 years in Egypt begin the 400 years with Isaac, and to make the 400 exact, use Isaac's 5th year, supposedly when he was weaned. Can you imagine weaning a child until he is 5 years old?

Even Jewish tradition says it was 2 years. And I find it hard to imagine that this one time mocking by Ishmael starts the time of affliction, as the 215-year proponents say.

Further, Abraham's seed spoken of here were alike strangers, servants, and afflicted in **one** land.[10] This is "One"; singular. They lived in 400 years (Egypt); not Canaan, Syria, and Egypt. Commenting on the context of Gen.15:13, Riggs adds, "The Genesis 15 passage refers to the sojourn in a land not theirs when God has just deeded Palestine to Abraham and his seed (cf. 15:7,18). "[11]

Gen.15:16 states, "But in the fourth generation they shall come here again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full". According to Haley, "The best critics hold that the term "generation "denotes a century. ... According to Fuerst and Gesenius, the Hebrew term means not only a generation, but also a century. So the Latin "seculum" originally meant an age or generation, but in later times came to denote a century."[13]

Strong states the meaning as "prop: 'a revolution of time'." Note that it was 470 years before they entered Canaan again. The logical question we should ask is, "Is there any *scriptural precedent* for translating this term, "dor," as anything but a normal father to son 'generation'?"[14]



6. *So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. And Moses threw it in the air, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and beast. Ex.9:10.*

Indeed, we find that "dor" is translated "age" in Is.38:12 and in Job 8:8,9. In Job 8, "dor" is "the former *age,"* referring to pre-patriarchal times when men lived to be hundreds of years old. In Isaiah 38, "dor" is in Hezekiah's lament, "my *age* is departed," referring to his lifespan. It is also used in Gen.6:9;7:1;9:12, and 17:7,9,12.

The full lifespan during Israel's sojourn in Egypt seems to have about 135 years; (see Amram at 137, Kohath at 133: Gen.6:18,20.) thus, "They shall come again in the 4th generation" could mean, "in 4 average lifespans (but not 4 generations)."

Judges 2:7-10 reinforces this use of the term"dor":

"And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old…

And also all that generation(dor) were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." [13a]

They did not conquer the Amorites, (Num.21:25; Deut.3:8) and return to Canaan until another 40 years after leaving Egypt, thus reinforcing translating "dor" here as "lifespans." Isaiah 38:10-12 says, "I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave; I am deprived of the residue of my years…mine age ("dor") is departed and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent; I have cut off like a weaver my life…"

Gen 15:14-16: "and also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge, and afterward they shall come out with great substance, and you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age; but in the 4th generation (dor) they shall come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" "In the 4th generation they shall return."

Albright adds, “The arabic cognate ‘darum’ often means ‘life-time’ (originally ‘cycle’). Syriac ‘dara’ is defined as 80 years; and the word, ‘darum’ appears in an inscription of Shamshi-Adad 1 of Assyria also in the meaning: “life-time” (7 daru elapsed from the collapse of the empire of Accad and his own reign, i.e., between c.2250 and c.1750 BC).

7. *Then Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt.*

There was hail and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very heavy hail, such as had never been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. The hail struck down everything that was in the field in all the land of Egypt, both man and beast. And the hail struck down every plant of the field and broke every tree of the field. Ex.9:23-25

The Three Questions here are:
1.What is meant by "generation” The Hebrew word here is "dor"= circle (as in circle of time). Scholars say this can mean: lifespan, century, or father to son generation.
2. Who's generation is this speaking of.? Israelite nation beginning with Jacob's sons, begin with Isaac, or the Amorites.
3. When do these generations start and end?
Begin with the promise to Abraham, begin in Isaac's 5th year, or begin with Jacob emigrating to Egypt?

Paul comments on this period in Acts 7:6: "But God spoke in this way: that his descendants would sojourn in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage & oppress them 400 years." That this "400" is likely a round number, compare other round numbers in scripture; e.g.: the 600,000 males exiting Egypt in Exodus 12:37 with the 626,550 count in Numbers 1:46,26:62.

Hendiksen comments, "The round figure "400 years," and the more exact figure "430 years," for the sojourn in Egypt are too definitely established in scripture as an indication of the time that Israel spent there to be so easily dismissed. (Gen.15:13, Acts 7:6, and Ex.12:40 Hebrew text). Paul, thoroughly at home in the OT knew this."[15]

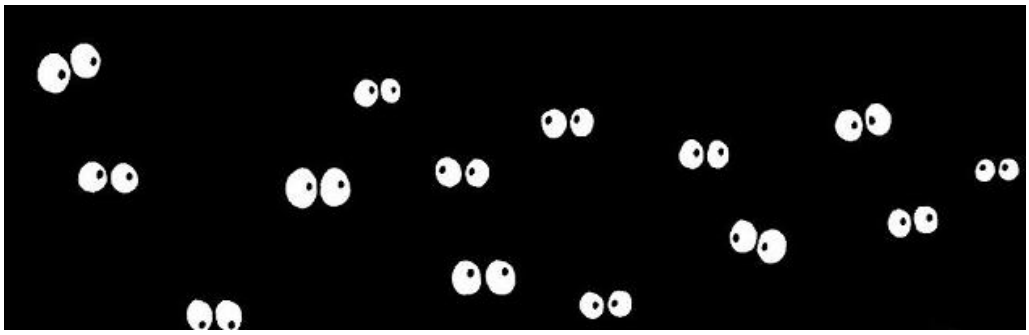
Note that the term "children of Israel" in Ex. 12:40 refers to Jacob's descendants as defined in scripture[16] Gen.46:8 says "And these are the names of the children of Israel that came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons…," but only Jacob, his sons, and his daughters are counted among the 33 in vs.15; likewise his sons and daughters in vss.18,22,25, 27; neither are the many servants and their families who certainly sojourned with them; and they were afflicted in one land only, not Syria and Egypt. (Gen.45:21,46:6-27,50:25).

For the 430 years to start with Abraham leaving Haran as in the short chronology, both Abraham and Isaac would have to be included in "the children of Israel," which is not a valid way of speaking, then or now. As 2 Kings 17:34 says, "the children of Jacob, whom He named Israel." And why not start with Abram leaving Ur many years before.

Also note the (unusual) exactness of the time period. Ex.12:41 states, "Now it came to pass at the end of the 430 years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt." Leaving Egypt *this selfsame day* would have corresponded to a well-known point to mark the "sojourning of the children of Israel" from, and what more likely known point in their history to date their exit from Egypt than their move to Egypt (Gen.46).

8.So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night. When it was morning, the east wind had brought the locusts. The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled on the whole country of Egypt, such a dense swarm of locusts as had never been before, nor ever will be again. They covered the face of the whole land, so that the land was darkened, and they ate all the plants in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Not a green thing remained, neither tree nor plant of the field, through all the land of Egypt. Ex.10:13-15

At that time, they probably had a record of the exact day that they entered Egypt (the selfsame day they left was the day the last confirmation of the promise was given to Jacob at Beersheba; Gen. 46:3), but probably did not know the exact day the promise was given to Abram. Jamieson relates, "The emigration to Egypt, being a new starting point in the history of Israel, became an epoch from which time was calculated."[17]



*9. So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was **pitch darkness** in all the land of Egypt three days. They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days.Ex. 10:22-23.*

51

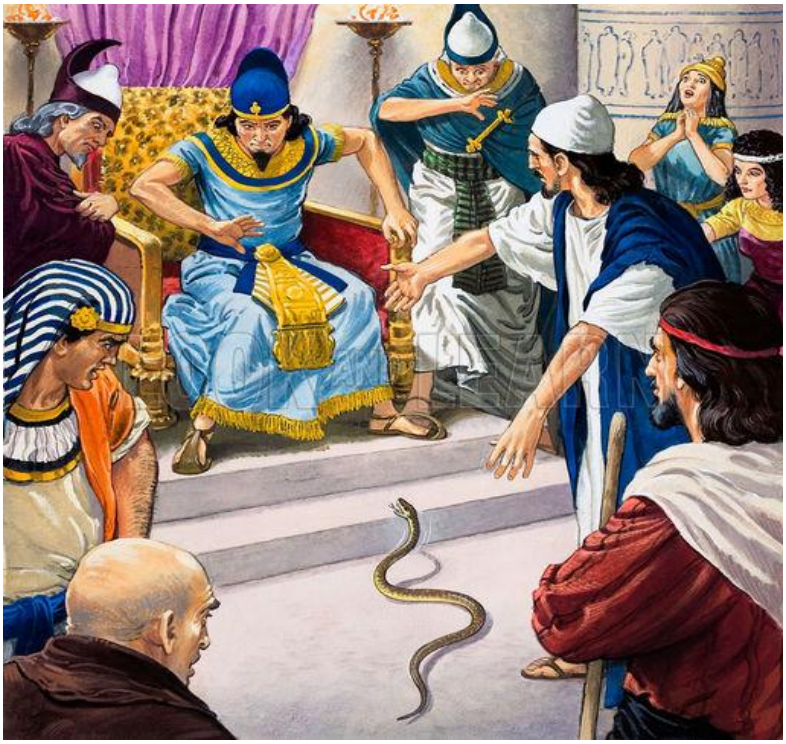
10. And every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle. Ex.11:5

Some would say that the shorter sojourn in Egypt must be true because of the quote in Genesis 15:16, which states: "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again..." Some also agree that this period starts in the future, not with Abraham or Isaac, but begins with Israel's entrance into Egypt, and the fourth generation crosses the Jordan into Canaan, but add that these four "generations" are supposed to be those of the four men listed in Levi's lineage in Exodus 6:16-20;1 Chron.6:1-3: Levi-Kohath-Amram-Aaron-Eleazar (with no missing gaps).

Firstly, why would this promise speak of only one tribe's lineage? Especially note that the other genealogies for the other tribes in the same period of time list more generations (e.g.: Ephraim through Joshua in I Cron 7:20-27 lists 10 generations for this period (11 including Joseph); between Judah and Bezaleel lists 7 in 1 Chron.2).[18]

Even if it were a prophesy of one specific line, why not the firstborn, Reuben, or why not Judah, as he was the father of the messianic line (Gen. 49:10; Ps.78:68). Especially, why not Joseph, as he was the natural choice: 1 Chron.5:1 says that Reuben's birthright was given to the sons of Joseph. So, the only logical way to take these 4 generations is 4 average lifespans of all the tribes.

Gen 15:13-16 states: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full."



So the first question to answer is: When do these "lifespans" begin? 1. When this promise was stated in Gen.15?, or 2. When Abram was born, or 3. When Isaac is born? or 4.From when they entered the strange land? As this promise starts with being a "stranger in a land that is not theirs," we will use that as the starting point of this prophesy, and "they shall come here again" as the end point. Lifespans seem to have been more similar when they lived in Egypt, so if we take an average lifespan then, this could possibly help us understand this scripture.

As far as we know from people who lived in this time-span(Jacob through Moses), the people then seem to have had an average lifespan of c.134.3 years; which makes c.537 years.(or Levi-Moses ave=131). Though generations are obviously skipped, Gen.47:28 has Jacob at 147, Exodus 6:16-18 has Levi at 137, Kohath at133, and Deut.34:7 has Moses at 120. The fourth average lifespan would be in the c.402-536 year period, beginning with their entrance to Egypt. This starts with Jacob emigrating to Egypt, and ending when they re-entered the promised land and wiped out most of the Amorites in the next 7 years(just after defeating the 2 Amorite kings, this side of the Jordan,Og and Sihon). We know from Ex.12:41 that they were in Egypt for 430 years and in the wilderness 40 years (Num.14:33). So that would equal 470-477 years until the Amorites were conquered, which fits the account in Genesis.

Another argument that has been raised is that the large numbers stated for each of the tribes of Israel, amounting to over 600,000 males over the age of 20, includes also the servants of Jacob and their descendants, but just as the 70 souls of the house of Jacob which are listed in Gen. 46, are only from Jacob's family and did not include servants, so the 600,000+ males counted from the twelve tribes exiting Egypt in Num.1 would not include descendants of servants.

Exo 12:37-8 states, "And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were* men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, *even* very much cattle". The 600,000 men are listed separately from the "mixed multitude" which "went up also with them." (Counting the women and children, the total must have been some 2-3 million souls).

But, as Keil points out, even if their servants had been circumcised, they cannot have reckoned among the 600,000 who went out, for the simple reason that they are not included in the seventy souls who went down to Egypt. Ex.1:5 places the number of those who came out in unmistakable connection with the number of those who went in.[19]

The mixed multitude probably didn't last long. **Num 11:4-33 states,** "And the mixed multitude that *was* among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, 'Who shall give us flesh to eat?' And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea... And while the flesh *was* yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague."

Such retainers are usually reckoned according to Oriental custom as parts of the families of their masters, and it is certain that they were so in the patriarchal families; because having become Hebrews included in the covenant by the rite of circumcision…but the genealogical lists, which are expressly said to be confined to heads of families, cannot be considered as giving a full enumeration of the representative families.

Some descendants are mentioned in this chapter (v.24-35) whose names do not previously occur…The heads only are mentioned. But the designation *head* implies others who were not heads. - there were other sons, who also had children, but not being heads, they were not mentioned, themselves and their posterity being included in the families of the heads (cf. 1 Chron.23:11)."

Jamieson comments:(Gen.46), "Concerning the 70 listed who entered Egypt, Jamieson says, "On the whole, as the numerous retinue of servants and retainers who belonged to the tribe…are excluded from this catalogue; and as not even the wives of the sons, who were probably of the families of Esau, Ishmael, Keturah, were taken into the enumeration, "all the souls" must be considered as limited to "the house of Jacob" (v.27)… as a general rule, Jacob's sons and grandsons married amongst their paternal kindred. The case of Simeon (v.10) is noticed as exceptional, as was that of Judah (ch.38:2), the prevailing practice being to select wives from the families of Ishmael, Keturah, or Edom. (p.258-9)" [20]

Concerning the accuracy of this number, Allis states, "The 603,550 total for the 12 tribes (Num. 1:46) is checked by the silver offering which every man is to pay when he is numbered (Ex. 20:13). Every male is to pay ½ shekel and the total is stated to be 100 talents and 1775 shekels of silver (Ex. 38:25). 100 talents at 3000 shekels to the talent are 600,000 shekels, and the 1775 shekels make 3550 ½ shekels, which gives exactly the 603,550 of the census." [21] Jamieson, who argues for 430 years in Egypt and admits missing generations in Levi's genealogy, believes the servants were included in this count. He states, "Moreover, no mention is made…of the servants who undoubtedly accompanied the patriarch into Egypt (Gen.46:6,32)."

Missing generations are common in lists where no years of begetting are given. As an example of the sameness of names in these genealogical lists, scroll down further down in Amram's lineage (the Amram who was Moses' father) in 1 Chron. 6:8-13 and notice other father to son (or grandson) references with identical names:

"Meraioth begat ***Amariah begat Ahitub, and Ahitub begat Zadok***, **and Zadok begat** Ahimaaz, and Ahhimaaz begat ***Azariah***, **and Azariah begat** Johanan, and Johanan begat ***Azariah***, (he it is that executed the priests office in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem) **and Azariah begat** Amariah, and *Amariah begat* ***Ahitub, and Ahitub begat Zadok***, **and Zadok begat** Shallum, and Shallum begat Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat ***Azariah***."

Numbers 3:15:39 states, “All that were numbered of the Levites, which Moses and Aaron numbered at the commandment of the LORD throughout their families, all the males from a month old and upward were twenty and two thousand.” Can one imagine 22,000 men born in just 4 generations from Levi?

As Keil & Delitzch comment on Ex. 6:16-20: "But the Amram mentioned in verse 20 as the father of Moses, cannot be the same person as the Amram who was the son of Kohath (ver.18), but must be a later descendant. For however the sameness of names may seem to favor the identity of the persons, if we simply look at the genealogy before us, a comparison of this passage with Num.iii.27,28 will show the impossibility of such an assumption. According to Num iii.27,28, the Kohathites were divided (in Moses' time)
into the four branches, Amramites, Izharites, Hebronites, and Uzzielites, who consisted together of 8600 men and boys (women and girls not being included). Of these, about a fourth or 2150 men would belong to the Amramites.

Now according to Ex. 18:3,4, Moses himself had only two sons. Consequently, if Amram, the son of Kohath, and the tribe father of the Amramites was the same person as Amram the father of Moses, Moses must have had 2147 brothers and brothers' sons (the brother's daughters, the sisters and their daughters not being reckoned at all).

But as this is absolutely impossible, it must be granted that Amram the son of Kohath was not the father of Moses, and that an indefinitely long list of generations has been omitted between the former and his descendant of the same name.”(Tiele, Chron.des A.T. p.36)[22] "Indefinitely long list" is admittedly an exaggeration, but he makes his point.

The counter argument here is that these numbers represent the descendants of servants and mixed marriages during their stay in Egypt, and also the mixed multitude which left Egypt with Israel as the “heads of their father’s houses” only are listed (Ex. 6:14); but even allowing this, can one picture approximately 2150 males (including servants) in Moses' father, Amram’s “family?”)[23]

There are two generations in a line of descent that we know something about on either end of Israel's sojourn in Egypt: Ephraim and Joshua. Jacob and his grown family entered Egypt in Joseph's 9th year of rule (Gen. 41:45-52; 45:6), and Ephraim was already born during the 7 years of plenty (a few years, say 3) before this. Ephraim to Joshua in I Cron 7:22-27 lists 10 generations (the most) for this period (his descent is traced through Ephraim's son in his old age, Beriah).

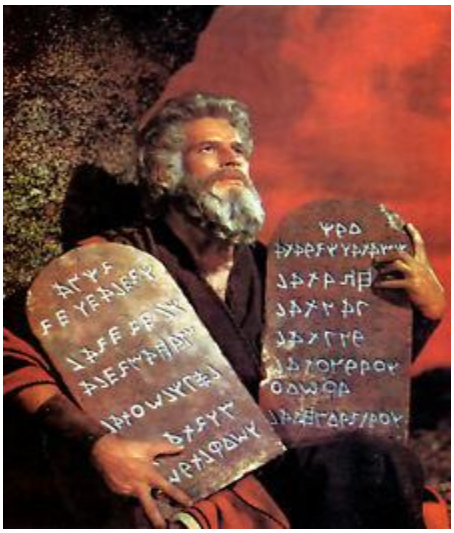
Another name is listed in vs.25, but they are brothers. Kiel states, "As the word בְּנוֹ is wanting after רָשֶׁף, we must hold Rephah and Resheph to be brothers"[24]

This portion of the statistics may be complete; It has been suggested that, because of his royal position, Joseph's lineage would have an advantage in preserving their genealogy complete. Joshua was 38 when he left Egypt (Josh 14:7; Deut. 1:3; 2:14). Using the 215-year model would require an average of approximately 21 years between the 10 generations: Ephraim *through* Joshua (215/10 =21.5yrs). Assuming a year of marriage before the first child, this means the *average* male of Joshua's line got married at 20.

Although possible, the question is: how likely is this? Joseph did not beget children until he was minimum 31 (Gen. 41:46,50), Job's average begetting seems to have been 35 (Job 42:16), and Moses did not beget children until he was minimum 41 (Acts 7:23). A 430-year model would have the average man (in Joshua's line) beget offspring at 43, assuming his genealogy is complete.

Some try to say the short sojourn is correct by positing numerous generations in Egypt, using Ephraim as an example. Gen 50:23 states, "And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third ***generation:*** the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees." Joseph lives to be 110, and started having children in his early thirties, so they posit the generations were short and numerous in Egypt. But we note from the numbers listed for each tribe after exiting Egypt, that Ephraim's line was not more than the other tribes (Num.1). Ephraim didn't experience the promise of a great nation until the times of the judges.

Keil comments, "This blessing began to be fulfilled from the time of the Judges, when the tribe of Ephraim so increased in extent and power, that it took the lead of the northern tribes and became the head of the ten tribes, and its name acquired equal importance with the name Israel, whereas under Moses, Manasseh had numbered 20,000 more than Ephraim (Num_26:34 and Num_26:37)."[24a]



Also, the total of 603,000 men stated in vs.36 (2-3M with women and children) only fits with a long sojourn, according to known growth rates. Wikipedia states, "The world's current (overall as well as natural) growth rate is **about 1.14%,** representing a doubling time of 61 years. We can expect the world's population of 6.5 billion to become 13 billion by 2067 if current growth continues. The world's growth rate peaked in the 1960s at 2% and a doubling time of 35 years."[24b] Note that fast growth countries like Nigeria, are growing at 2.5% and.3.74 % for Niger. Countries with high immigration, of course, grow the highest; but we are interested in natural increase.

The standard population growth formula is: $X_T=x_0\ (1+r)^t$ (OnmiCalculator.com), where:
t= time period.
$X_{t=}$ population at end of time period (Exodus)
$X_{o=}$ initial population at year 0. (entrance)
r= rate of growth (accounting for deaths)

Exo 1:7 "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them."

So using r as 2.5%, as Israel was multiplying faster than average; we have this formula; $x_t=70(1+.025)^{430}$= 2.8M. This is what we'd expect to find. But the alternative 215 years is impossibly small: $x_t=70(1.025)^{215}$= 14K people. Even at a rate of 3.74%, which is unlikely for a developed nation, 215 years only gets one to a 188K population.

Critics argue that the 70 who came to Egypt does not count all the daughters or the wives. On the other hand we see it includes grandsons and sons of young men, such as Benjamin's, who must have been born later. But even if we double the number of Jacob's family who came to Egypt; the total would not agree with 215 years: x_t= 140(1.025)^{215}= 28K; not even a possibility.

So the 430 years stated in Ex.12:40 agrees very well then with a 430 year time period (x_t=2.86M) from population growth statistics, but not at all with a 215 year period (41K).

And this is not even counting the massive loss at the time of Moses' birth (for over 3 mo-Ex.2:2), when Pharaoh and his people were killing all the male Israeli babies born. Ex.1:22 states: "And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, 'Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.'" And this was 80 years (3 generations) before the Exodus. Therefore, proponents of a 215 year sojourn in Egypt, have to assume an extremely high growth rate of >5%, possible only with multiple wives per family, or that the 603,000 men stated in Num.1:46 includes the progeny of their servants, who came with them, even though the beginning count did not include any servants: Ex.46 (note that Moses father had only 3 children).

Num.26:59, along with Gal.3:17, is taken to be another proof text that the sojourn in Egypt was limited to 215 years. Num. 26:58-9 says, "And Kohath begat Amram. And the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whom *her mother* bore to Levi in Egypt: and she bare unto Amram Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister."

Note that the words "her mother" are not in the Hebrew text--, but added by the translators. Kiel relates, "...Jochebed, the mother of Moses, was not a daughter of Levi in the strict sense of the word, but only a Levitess or descendant of Levi, who lived about 300 years after Levi; just as her

husband Amram was not actually the son of Kohath, who bore that name (Ex.vi.18), but a later descendant of this older Amram."

Lastly, some say the Amram, son of Kohath, in Ex. 6:20, was the same Amram who married Jochabed and "birthed" Moses and Aaron, but that this "bearing" should be understood in the wider sense, merely stating that Moses was their descendant, not their son. [25]

As Ex.2:1 states concerning Moses' parents, "And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi." This man was of the house of Levi (Amram), not Levi's son; neither was the "daughter of Levi" (Jochebed) literally Levi's daughter. The LXX and Syriac say Jochebed was not Amram's aunt, but rather his "cousin" (as well as his wife) in Ex. 6:20.

Clark comments on Ex.6:20: His father's sister (wtdd dodatho). The true meaning of this word is uncertain. Parkhurst observes that dwd dod signifies an uncle in 1 Sam. x. 14; Lev. x. 4, and frequently elsewhere. "It signifies also an uncle's son, a cousin-german: compare Jer. xxxii. 8 with ver. 12, where the Vulgate renders ydd dodi by patruelis mei, my paternal cousin; and in Amos vi. 10, for wdwd dodo, the Targum has hybyrq karibiah, his near relation.

So, the Vulgate, propinquus ejus, his relative, and the Septuagint, oi oikeioi autwn, those of their household. The best critics suppose that Jochebed was the cousin-german of Amram, and not his aunt."[26] But either way, this verse presents a difficulty. For example, if one takes the verse with Jochebed as Levi's daughter, a 430-year sojourn is impossible. The question though is: How probable is even a 215-year sojourn, taking the verse as translated? Geisler comments: "Either way, it is clear that there were more than 3 generations between Levi and Moses."[27]

Jacob married Leah at the beginning of his second 7 year term with Laban in Syria (Gen.29:20-34; 21:25). The Lord opened her womb because she was hated, and she bore 4 children in rapid succession, Levi being the 3rd (say in the 3rd year of marriage). Joseph is born at the end of this second 7-year period, becomes ruler at 30, and after 7 years of plenty and 2 of famine, the Israelites moves to Egypt. This would make Levi 43 when he entered Egypt (7-3+30+7+2).

Moses was born 80 years prior to the Exodus by Jochebed. If Jochebed bore Moses at 22 years of age, which is reasonable, this leaves 113 years in the land of Egypt before Levi bore Jochebed (215-80-22), which makes Levi 156 years of age at the time (43+113). Even if Jochebed bore Moses later when she was 42, Levi would be 136 at the time. His total lifespan was 137 yrs (Ex.6:16), and his child-bearing years probably ended at about 100, judging from his father, Jacob.

Although unlikely, we could of course split the time of begetting more equally between Jochebed and Levi, making Levi 100 and Jochebed 78 at begetting. (215-80=135, 135+43=178-178-100=78). Although it may have been possible for Levi to bear at 100 (note Jacob's age at begetting Benjamin), as we know from Sarah, this would require a miracle for Jochebed (Gen. 16:16;17:17). Sarah's age at menopause was likely the same as it was 3 generations later; and it may be argued thus: Gill states, " In Gen 16:2 Sarah says "Behold now the Lord has restrained me from bearing. This probably marks the end of her efforts to conceive a child, and she probably tried to the end of hope (menopause)." [28] Abraham was 86 then (16:16) and she was 10 years younger than he (17:17); so she was 76 then. Some have argued that the names in Ex.6:16 are the tribe (Levi), the clan (Kohath), and the family-group (Amram) to which Moses and Aaron belong.[29]

A further note on Ex 12:41: The only logical way to explain the various readings of Ex 12:41 believing the original to refer to a 215 period in Canaan and 215 in Egypt is to reject both the LXX and the Hebrew in favor of the Sam., saying the words "*and their fathers* who lived in the *land of Cainan*." dropped out by error or deliberately for the same alleged reason the LXX and Sam extended the ages of the ancestors in Gen 5 (to make their history longer, as other nations also did). However, that is a long phrase missing from the more respectable Hebrew text, both Mass. and DSS; a shaky foundation for interpreting anything in the Hebrew OT.

Following are additional comments which shed light on this: Paul J Ray of Associates for Biblical Research says: "The Hebrews, like other ancient peoples, dated long periods of time in terms of lifetimes (Freedman & Lundbom 1978:170,174; Albright 1961:50-1, Girdlestone 1948:315) or the circle of a person's lifetime (Culver 1980:186); the word "dor" coming from a word meaning "to go in a circle."(Gesenius 1982:193).

This is to be contrasted with the word "toledot" which is also translated as "generations", but in the biological sense of descendants (Holiday 1971:387). Therefore "dor" should be seen as a circle or cycle of time, rather than generation(s) as both etymology and context suggest.[30]

Ellicott comments: "was four hundred and thirty years.—Comp. the prophecy:—'Thy seed shall be a stranger in *a land* that is not theirs [Egypt, not Canaan], and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them *four hundred years* and also *that nation* whom they shall serve will I judge' (Genesis 15:13-14). The genealogy of Joshua (1Chronicles 7:22-27), which places him in the eleventh generation from Jacob, accords well with this term of years. The other genealogies are more or less abbreviated."[31]

Barnes states: "The obvious intention of Moses is to state the duration of the sojourn in Egypt."[32] Driver adds, "Not only has Israel's sojourn in Egypt alone to do with the present context, but until the birth of Jacob's sons there were no 'children of Israel' to dwell in Canaan at all."[33]

Jamieson states, "Moreover, it speaks of his (Abram's) descendants being strangers in a strange land - a description totally inapplicable to Canaan, which was his as well as theirs by divine promise...they could not be said to be afflicted, much less to lose their independence.

Above all, it is added, "that in the fourth generation they should come here again" - words which evidently mean that the servitude and affliction were to be endured in another - a foreign land, from which they were to be restored to Canaan.

Another difficulty which stood in the way of the short chronology was the genealogy of Aaron. (Ex.6:16-20), but we have shown on that passage (num. 26:59) that the genealogical table must have been abridged. For between Joseph and Joshua there were ten decents- he being the 11th- i.e., the period between the migration to Egypt and the Exodus comprised ten full generations of 30 or 40 years each, with part of an 11th amounting to 430 years.

As to the true meaning, of the Hebrew text, we have arrived at the conclusion that it is sound, and that it means what it says, viz., that 430 years elapsed between the arrival of Jacob in Egypt, with his sons, and sons' sons, and their families, as related in Genesis 46:1-27, and the commencement of the exodus. The time is required by the genealogy of Joshua (1 Chronicles 7:22-27)..." [34]

The Pulpit commentary adds: "If not absolutely required for the multiplication of the race from "seventy souls" to above two millions,[35] it is at any rate more in accord with that fact than the alternative number, 215. It is twice repeated, so that "the mistake of a copyist" is almost impossible. Verse 40. - The sojourning of the children of Israel, which dwelt in Egypt. Rather, "Which they sojourned in Egypt." (Compare the Septuagint - ἡ κατοίκησις η{ν κατῴκησαν.) Four hundred and thirty years. Literally 'thirty years and four hundred years.'[36]

The problems with the 215 year stay in Egypt are:
1. That the term "children of Israel" in scripture never means more than that, despite some allegations.
2. How can the term "generations" here mean the father to son type, when Moses had only four, Joshua had ten, and the rest of the tribes had differing amounts. Why would the four generations

listed for Levi-Moses be the ones (and only ones) referred to in Abram's time as “in the fourth generation” ? Why not the line Joseph who had the birthright (1 Chron 5:1), or the Messianic line of Judah?

So why take them as complete, whereas Joshua has 10 for this same period? Abbreviated generations are common in lists without years (as opposed to chronogenealogies).
3. Paul's statement in Gal.3:16 "the confirmation of the promise" is taken to be the first instance of the promise, and not the last confirmation of it the very day (night) they left for Egypt. (Hebrew day goes 6PM to 6PM). Note the unusually specific language here: "And it came to pass at the end of 430 years, *even the selfsame day* it came to pass..." The Jews did not know the exact day of the promises to Abram, or Isaac, but the last confirmation which was on the very day the whole extended family of Israel with their servants moved to Egypt; they likely recorded to the day, and so Moses was able to write "even the selfsame day."
4. From 70 entering (Jacob's family) to 2-3 million exiting Egypt are less likely with a 215-year interval.

Paul J. Ray concludes, “-On the basis of the above evidence, it would seem plausible that the genealogies of Levi in Exodus 6 and Numbers 26 are incomplete.
As such, they are consistent with a view that the 400 (430) years could refer to the Israelite sojourn in Egypt alone. A period of only 215 years would be too small to accommodate the above data; however, 400 (430) years would accommodate those data rather well. It would seem, then, that the expression “in the fourth generation [dôr]” should be understood as “in the fourth cycle of time,” as suggested above.”[37]

Hoehner states, “A third and perhaps best view is that the period began with the final confirmation of the covenant to Jacob (given in Gen. 46:1-4). Accordingly the 430 years went from the end of one era (the Age of Promise) to the beginning of another (the Age of Law). This seems to fit best with Exodus 12:40. Gen. 15:13 and Acts 7:6, in referring to the sojourn in Egypt as 400 years, may be using rounded figures. Perhaps the best solution is to say Paul was looking at periods of time. The promises were given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These three patriarchs were all recipients of God's promise. The promise was reconfirmed in Genesis 46:1-4 to Jacob at Beersheba as he was on his way to Egypt. From that point (the end of God's giving promises to the patriarchs) to the Exodus was 400 years.”[38]

The Conquest of Canaan

Jericho

Wilderness:

The next period is that of the wilderness wanderings. Acts 13:18 states, “And about the time of 40 years suffered He their manners in the wilderness.”

The 40 years of wandering in the wilderness composes of about a year in the wilderness until they get to Kadesh, where they abide for about a year, and wandering 38 years more until they enter Canaan. Joshua 5:6, Deut. 1:3, 46; 2:14.

Conquest:

Caleb:

After the initial seven-year conquest of 7 nations (Josh. 3:10, 24:11), Caleb is 85. (Joshua 14:7, 10). All those men 20 years and up at the Exodus die in the wilderness except Caleb and Joshua. Num. 32:11

At the time of Conquest shortly after the death of Joshua, (Judges 1:1) Caleb gives his daughter to Othniel for a wife (Judges 1:13). Othniel judges 40 years after an 8-year oppression, after Israel becomes idolatrous, and after Caleb and the elders who outlived Joshua die. Therefore, Othniel outlives Caleb by some amount over 48 years. Caleb's generation is considered “old and advanced in years" at 110 years. (Joshua dies at 110 and 110 years old is likely the usual maximum lifespan then). Joshua 13:1; 23:1,2

Caleb was 78 years old entering Canaan. This means Caleb would have died about 32 years into the conquest (110-78) if he lived to be about as old as Joshua; which is likely. A maximum age for the elders entering Canaan would be 20+40; so the last of them likely died 110-60=50 years in the land.

Julius Africanus believed that the elders outlived Joshua by 30 years, which would be 55 years after Jericho. So if judgment came right after the last elder died, this plus the 8 year oppression would be the time they lived in the land before the judges.

We estimate the age of Joshua from Caleb. Caleb records: Forty years old was I . . . and I am this day fourscore and five years old." Ellicott states, "In this speech we have the only direct evidence as to the duration of the wars of Canaan under Joshua. The spies were sent from Kadesh-barnea in the second year of the Exodus, about 38 years before the passage of Jordan (see Deuteronomy 2:14).

Thus, Caleb would be 40+38=78 years old when they crossed the Jordan. He was 85 when they began to divide the country. Therefore the initial conquest was a period of 7 years. At that time it is said of Joshua: "Now Joshua was old *and* stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, 'you art old *and* stricken in years, and there remains yet very much land to be possessed.'" (Josh 13:1)

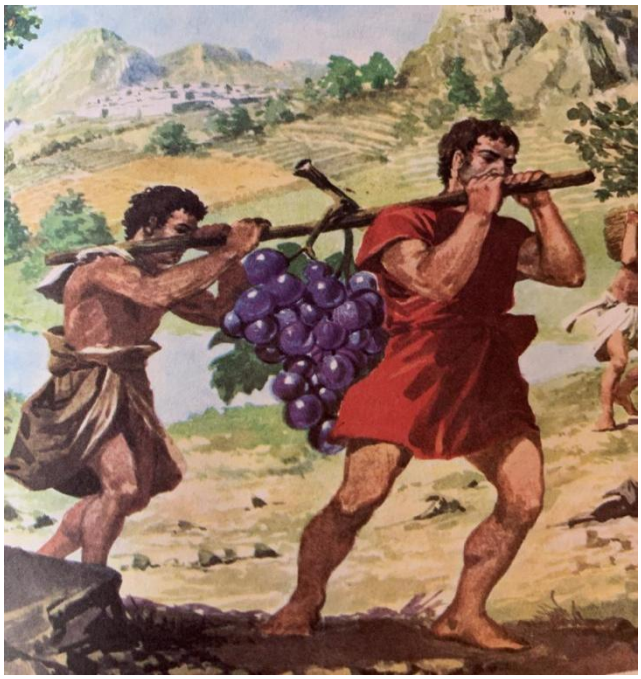
And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old… And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. - Judges 2:2-10

" And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites: And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Jebusites; and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughter to be their sons, and served their gods...

And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgat the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves. Therefore, the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim 8 years." Judges 3:5-8. Note that there is a time period here after the conquest, after the elders who out-lived Joshua die (Joshua 24:31), and after Caleb dies, when the nation becomes idolatrous. Although we cannot be exact for this period, there are clues.

Some say the period of conquest and settlement was perhaps 55 years based on the "elders who outlived Joshua who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that He did for Israel" being 110 at their deaths and no more than 15 when they left Egypt. (Josh.24:31, Jud.2:7, Num. 13:2, 14:29). Remember, the oldest elders in the camp were 60 when they entered Canaan. They would have been less than but probably near 20, say 15-20, when they exited Egypt. All the ones over 20 died in the wilderness. This would still agree with the timelines herein based on Othniel (allowing 7 years for the declension period). [2]

Soon after this (likely within a few years), Israel became rebellious and their enemies oppressed them for 8 years. This makes the total period Israel was in the land (until the judges) at approximately 58-63 years. (60 $\pm$ 2 years)



Keil states, commenting on Judges, “No doubt the statement in ch.23:1, to the effect that “many days after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their foes,” Joshua called together the representatives of the nation to renew the covenant of the nation with the Lord before his death, when taken in connection with the statement in ch. 19:50, that he built the city of Timmath-serah, which the tribes had given him for an inheritance after the distribution of the land by lot was over, and dwelt herein, proving very clearly that there were certainly “many days” (Eng.ver. “a long time”) between the division of the land and the death of Joshua.”[3]

Then there is the evidence from Othniel's life. Othniel is a full-grown man of war, desirous of taking a wife, at the time of Joshua’s death, say 30 years old (taking 30 years as an average generation then). If Caleb was 100 or 105 then (as he would have been if he were 5-10 years younger than Joshua), this would have been 22-27 years into the conquest. Therefore Othniel, if he also lived to be 110, was 30, 25 years into the conquest, he would be 35-40 at Caleb’s death, and the time for the rest period, minus the 8-year oppression and his 40-year judgeship, would be 22-27 years (110-35-48).

The time period could not be longer than this unless Othniel lives to be over 110.
Othniel is said to be Caleb's younger brother who judged Israel for 40 years after an 8-year oppression and after the judges who outlived Joshua and that whole generation dies. (Judges 2:7,10; 3:8-11). There is disagreement though on which family Othniel was from.
However, according to all the scriptures, *Othniel is always called the son of Kenaz (5 times), and Caleb is always called the son of Jephunneh (15 times)*, although scripture also calls “Caleb, the son of Jephuneh, the Kenezite,” which is to say, a descendant of Kenaz.

There are a few Kenaz’s in scripture, but the one who is the father of the Kenezites is unknown. The genealogies in 1 Chron. 4:13-15 show that one Kenaz was Othniel’s father and another Kenaz was Caleb’s grandson. Those who hold to Othniel being Caleb’s brother say the expression, “son of Kenaz” is equivalent to the expression, “the Kenezite” and so does not mean

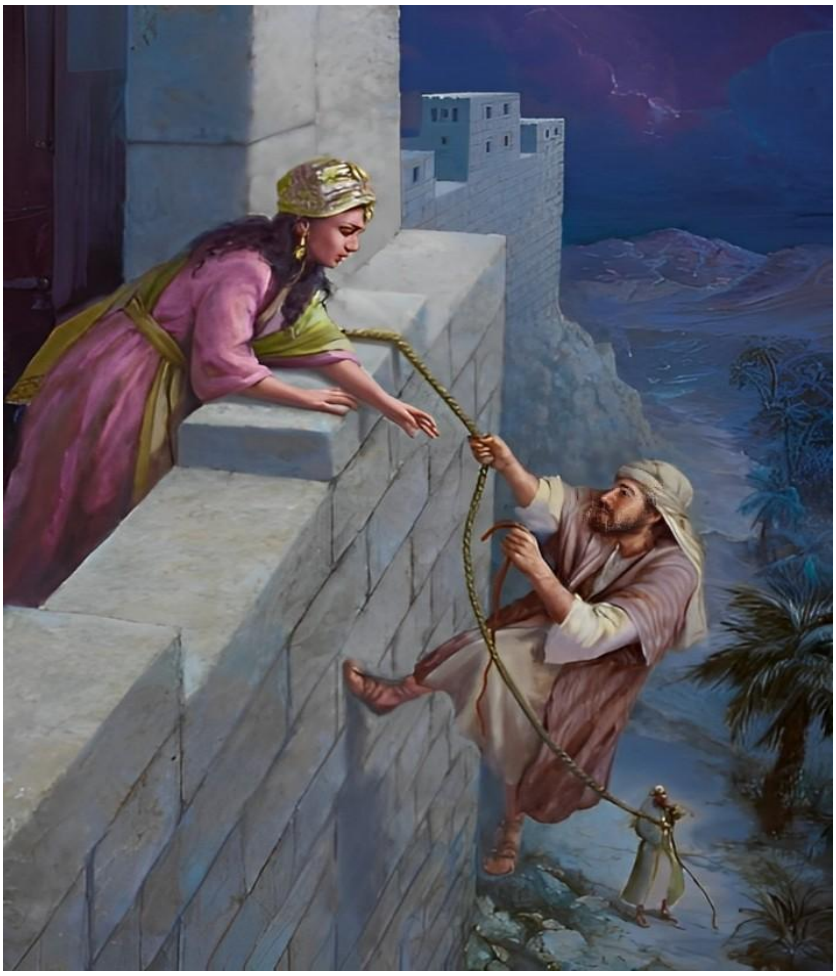
Othniel was Kenaz's son. Judges 3:9 states: "Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother." The LXX in Judges 1:13 has "Othniel, the younger son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother." [4] Although the LXX is prone to altering the text to solve a problem, this rendering is also supportable in the Hebrew. Kiel states, "Othniel, according to Judges 3:9 the first judge of the Israelites after Joshua's death, is called…either "the son of Kenaz (and) brother of Caleb," or "the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb."

> The second rendering is quite admissible (comp. 2 Sam 13:3,32 with 1 Chron. 2:13), but the former is the more usual; and for this the Masorites have decided, since they have separated *achi Caleb* from *ben-Kenaz* by a *tiphachah*. And this is the correct one, as "son of Kenaz" is equivalent to "the Kenizzite" (Josh. 14:6) …"
>
> "But the other reason: "that Caleb is always called the son of Jephunneh, Othniel always son of Kenaz, should cause us to hesitate before we take Othniel to be the proper brother of Caleb," looses all it's weight when we find that Caleb is also called in Num. 32:12 and Josh 14:6, (the Kenezite), and it is seen that Caleb therefore as well as Othniel, was a son of Kenaz.
>
> Now if the Kenazite, Caleb, the son of Jephunneh were a brother of Kenaz, the father of Othniel, we must suppose an older Kenaz, the grandfather or great grandfather of Caleb, and a younger Kenaz, the father of Othniel. This supposition is certainly feasible, for according to verse 15 of our chapter (1 Chron.4), a grandson of Caleb again was called Kenaz; but if it be probable is another question." [5]

Caleb's daughter asks him for springs of water

As the same pattern appears elsewhere in the genealogies, we can compare scripture with scripture here. In 2 Sam. 13:3, it speaks of "Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother." and we know from 1 Chron. 2:13 that Shimeah was David's brother.

Therefore, we have scriptural precedence to believe that Othniel was Caleb's nephew and that Kenaz was Caleb's brother. The view that Caleb was Othniel's older brother, is supportable by the text and would give us an even more definite figure for this period; however, Jephuneh perhaps would have been too old to bear Othniel if more than 50 years separated brothers.



Shortly after Joshua dies, Caleb gives his daughter to Othniel for a wife (Judges 1:13). Caleb dies a few years later, Israel turns away from God, and 48 more years later, Othniel dies. Caleb's generation is considered old and advanced in years at 110. (Joshua 23:1,2).

Joshua dies at 110 and 110 is likely the longest lifespan then; though both Moses at 120 and Aaron (in the previous generation) at 123 lived longer;[6] a good old age being one of the blessing of the righteous. We will assume that Joshua, Caleb, and Othniel live to about 110 years.

Therefore, Othniel was over 48 years, at least say, 50 years Caleb's junior, but hardly more if brothers, and enters Canaan at the age of 28 (78-50), and dies say at 110 after an 8-year oppression and 40-year judgeship. This would leave 34 years for the conquest and division of the land and rest (110-28-8-40).

The Judges

We have shown that Caleb probably died 32 years into the conquest, so this model is possible, but how all the events mentioned in scripture for the period from leaving the wilderness to Cushan's oppression, such as all the elders and all that generation dying, another generation arising which intermarried with the heathen and turning idolatrous (Judges 3:5-8), fit into 34 years is the question for this model.

Actually, the longer period in the land before Cushan is more likely: 52-57 years. Barnes states, "If Joshua was about 80 at the entrance into Canaan, 30 years would bring us to the close of his life. The "elders" would be all that were old enough to take part in the wars of Canaan Jdg_3:1-2; and therefore, reckoning from the age of 20 to 70, a period of about 50 years may be assigned from the entrance into Canaan to the death of the elders, or 20 years after the death of Joshua."[7]

In Acts 13:19,20 KJV, Paul states, "And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He divided their land to them by lot. And after that He gave unto them judges by the space of 450 years, until Samuel the prophet."

The times of the judges are added up more ways than any other period. The most common method in the past was to add the years stated serially. Note how the serial count of oppressions and judges from the books of Judges and 1 Samuel adds up approximately to the "about 450 years" of Paul's statement in Acts 13:20. (422 years from Othniel until Samuel).

Moreover, as we have noted with Luke, in his statement of Jesus being "about 30", when if fact his next birthday was his 30th, so here, Paul's "by the space of" is much more accurate than 18 years off (422 years). Further, Paul would have had access to temple records as Luke did (Luke 3); and we know he was a scholar "brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, *and* taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers." (Acts 22:3) As Samuel was a judge before Saul, it's likely his years until then are counted by Paul in his "judges by the space of 450 years."

As for the prima facia judges count, David Corson points out, "This understanding (discrete serial episodes) can be put to the test at each point of the history. If a judge died and the peace continued, then the sum of the years in *deliverance* is recorded thusly: "the land had rest" so many years. If a judge died and was succeeded by another judge, then the years of each judge is named. And if a judge performs his accomplishments during an already current period of general rest (i.e., Shamgar, in Judges 3:31), no years are given him at all."[1]

Some believe many judges had overlapping reigns rather than successive judges following each other. But as Jones points out, "It is believed that God's main purpose in giving the time periods of rule and authority as well as the ages of the begetting of sons, etc., was to make possible the ascertaining of the chronology and dates..."[2]

Compare this reading of Acts 13:19.20, which is the reading found in the majority of Manuscripts (which is followed by the KJV here), with the reading found in most modern versions[2](which is based on a few Egyptian copies, principally A,B,C, and Sinaiticus). "For example, the NIV reads, "He overthrew seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to his people as their inheritance. All this took about 450 years. After this God gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet."

Corson adds, "One's understanding of these changes is helped along by the phrase, 'All this took about'- which is *wholly supplied by the translator*… An interpretation let alone translation of these verses in Acts 13, which applies the 450 years backwards, is utterly without foundation. It's inclusion without brackets in modern translations is a disservice if not a deceit. The natural reading of 450 years to the judges era is supportable by all the manuscripts; and it is expressly given in the Authorized (Textus receptus) and majority text versions….The alternative minority variant (at least as understood by NIV) appears to certainly be a later gloss, since it destroys the orderly arrangement of Paul's presentation."[4]

The Judges & Oppressions until Saul

Who	Years	Reference
Othniel	40	Jud 3:11
Moab	18	3:14
Ehud/Shamgar	80	3:30
Sisera/Jabin	20	4:3
Deborah/Barak	40	5:31
Midian	7	6:1
Gideon	40	8:28
Abimelech	3	9:22
Tola	23	10:2
Jair	22	10:3
Philistine/Ammon	18	10:8
Jephthah	6	12:7
Izban	7	12:9
Elon	10	12:11
Abdon	8	12:14
Philistine/Samson	40	13:1
Eli	40	1 Sam.4:18
Samuel	28	Acts 13:21
	450	

Sir Robert Anderson adds, "The RV reading of Acts 13:20 seems to dispose of my solution of the perplexing problem of the 480 years of I Kings 6:1. But here in accordance with their usual practice, and in neglect of the principles by which experts are guided in dealing with conflicting evidence, the revisers slavishly followed certain of the oldest MSS. And the effect on this passage is disastrous. For it is certain, that neither the Apostle said, not the Evangelist wrote, that Israel's enjoyment of the land was limited to 450 years, or that 450 years elapsed before the era of the Judges

The text adopted by the revisers is therefore clearly wrong. Dean Alford regards it as an attempt at correcting the difficult chronology of the verse; and he adds, 'taking the words as they stand, no other sense can be given to them than that the time of the Judges lasted 450 years…that is, the era within which occurred the rule of the judges."

We note in passing, that Paul leaves out the ~50 years they were in the land after the conquest but before the judges. But as it is plain the judges include Samuel's judgeship until Saul, and the fact Paul does not say 422 years, which he would have if not including Samuel; this then gives us Samuel's judgeship unitl Saul as 28 years. (450-422=28).

It is not that the Judges ruled for 450 years; in which case the accusative would be used, as in verse 18, but, as the use of the dative implies, that the period until Saul, characterized by the rule of the Judges, lasted 450 years.*"* [5] This would include the time of Samuel's judgeship, while his latter years, when Saul reigned, is probably included with Saul's 40 years.

Paul's statement: "After that He gave them Judges about the space of 450 years until Samuel the prophet," is a good fit with the natural serial reading. Note the wording in Judges. (e.g.: "After him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and he judged Israel 22 years…Then the children of Israel again did evil…") As Corson states, "This could not be more serially expressed…Each was the prominent man of his day; each judged, not over a tribe or region, but expressly over Israel."[6] "The Lord delivered them "all the days of the judge", and as soon as the judge died, they did evil, and the Lord sent oppressors (Judges 2:18-19).

Jerubbaal stone (Gideon)

Another *chronological* problem is the 300 year statement of Jepthath in Jud.11:25-6.

"And now *art* thou anything better than Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? did he ever strive against Israel, or did he ever fight against them, while Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that *be* along by the coasts of Arnon, three hundred years? Why therefore did ye not recover *them* within that time? It must be added that although many scholars think this statement about 300 years to be original, some do not, preferring either to end the sentence with Arnon, or rather make it '300 cities.'

Rawlinson states: "**Three hundred years**. These words seem quite unintelligible and out of place. They are also chronologically impracticable. One expects the number of the cities, as in ver. 33, rather than the number of years; and it is remarkable that the whole number of cities taken by the Israelites on the east of Jordan must have been just about 300, since the half-tribe of Manasseh had sixty, and if Gad and Reuben had the same proportion, it would be exactly 300 (5 × 60).

'Within that time'. The Hebrew phrase, which occurs about seventy times, invariably means **at that time**, and here can only refer to the time of the first settlement in the days of Balak, of which he had been speaking - another proof that the enumeration **three hundred years** is out of place here.

If the reading **years is** not, as above suggested, an error for **cities**, the whole sentence, **three hundred years**, may very probably be an interpolation by a professed chronologist. The adding up of all the numbers of the servitudes and rests given in the book gives 301 years from the commencement of the oppression by Chushan-rishathaim to the death of Jair." [7]

Ellicott states: " it seems quite possible that "three hundred years" may be a marginal gloss which has crept into the text. What makes this more probable is that the words not only create an immense chronological difficulty, but (1) are quite needless to Jephthah's argument, and (2) actually conflict with the rest of the sentence, which refers to Balak alone; the argument being, If Balak, "at that time" (as the words should be rendered), did not advance any claim, what right have you to do so now? ...Within that time. —This is a mistranslation, due probably to the perplexity caused by the "three hundred years." The Hebrew has "in that time," i.e., at that crisis."Deut. 2:24,31,34,36 states "Rise up, take your journey and pass over the river Arnon; behold, I have given unto your hand Sihon, the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to possess it and contend with him in battle… Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land before you; begin to possess that you may inherit his land…. and we took all his cities at that time…from Aroer…even unto Gilead." [8]

Cambridge commentary: "Thus three hundred years must have been inserted into the narrative, to the disturbance of the proper sense of the clause which follows: 'within that time' is an incorrect rendering; the words mean 'at that time' (cf. Jdg 3:29, Jdg 4:4, Jdg 12:6 etc.), i.e. when Israel settled in Heshbon. "[9]

Eli and Samuel

Many who now hold to a short count in Judges agree with the serial count until Jephthah, except possibly Ehud's 80קועיאט years (one MSS has 8 קועיא years[10]), but say that all the later judges, including Jephthah, ruled concurrently in different regions of the country. There are many variations of this theory.

For example, Schmidt has Samuel and Abdon concurrent with Samson's 20-year judgeship, and Jephthah, Isban, and Elon concurrent with Eli's 40 year judgeship, making the entire period, Jephthah to Saul, only 44 years! [11] However, proof for this now popular theory of concurrent rule is lacking, and is only proposed in order to solve a difficulty; to make the "480" of I Kings 6:1 fit.

There is also the theory that the 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1 does not represent the whole period stated, but only the years they were free, not the years they were oppressed. However, scripture never speaks this way, and this theory too seems only proposed to solve a chronological problem. Indeed, if one believes 1 Kings 6:1 was not original, but a later interpolation into the text, an editor believing the judges rule was written like this, could have been the reason the number 480 was chosen, and the phrase added to the text.[12]

As an example of this theory, which says that the periods of rest mentioned are really the totals of both the times of oppression and the times of rest, Jones asserts, "For example, the verses relating to Judge Ehud are interpreted as meaning that due to disobedience and sin, Israel served Eglon the King of Moab 18 years. God raised up Ehud as His instrument to judge and deliver her and then the land had rest. A break or pause in thought is construed as following after the word "rest" (vs.30) so that the next two words are taken as a recapitulation whereby the total time elapsed for the whole story (Judges 3:12-30) was fourscore or 80 years… The 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1 demand this manner of interpretation of the narrative."[13] As no Hebrew scholar I know of reads Judges this way; the problem with this theory is whether the Hebrew *can* be understood this way. [13a]

One argument Jones makes which should be considered is that of the time of Eli. Eli's judgeship of 40 years is expressly stated in 1 Sam. 4:18, which reads, "And he judged Israel 40 years." Jones says that his years should not be added at all, because Eli never functioned in the sense of judge as the others had; he never delivered Israel from her enemies. As it says of the judges, "Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them" (Jud.2:16).

Deborah is called a judge and yet it was Barak who actually fought their enemies (Jud. 4:4,5); and in Ez. 44:21, 24, the priests are said to be judging, so the case could be made for Eli that his 40 years of judging are not 40 years of deliverance, but concurrent with another or others who actually delivered Israel. According to Jones' chronology, the time-frame from Abdon's death to Samuel's deliverance at Mizpah would terminate with the end of the 40-year Philistine oppression of Judges 13:1; thus overlapping Samson's 20-year Judgeship and Samuel's first year as judge.[14]

1 Sam 7:13,14 records the victory at Mizpah: "So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the *coast* of Israel, and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and the coast thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life."

Therefore, if one does not add Eli's years or Samuel's until Mizpah, this would indicate that "the period until Saul characterized by the rule of the judges…450 years"[15] begins with the division of the land, 7 years into the conquest, not Othniel.

Countering Jones' argument for not adding Eli's 40 years is Corson's model for Eli: "He seems not to have been troubled until the very closing days of his life, when the Philistines swept in. Samson (in the days of the Philistines) killed many, and weakened and troubled them…but he terminated the 40 year high hand of the Philistines by pulling down the temple of Dagon…he killed more than a thousand of the flower of Philistine society…thus Eli, as stout priest rather than a warrior, was able to judge quietly in the 40 years of Philistine recovery that followed."[16]

The only other details one needs to explain occur in the time stated for the Philistine oppression during Samson's judgeship and Shamgar's judgeship. Judges 13:1 says, "...the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines 40 years." Judges 13:5; 15:20 adds, "and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines…and he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines 20 years." Since Samson judging Israel occurred only during the Philistine occupation and not after delivering them, as with the other judges, Samson's 20-year judgeship was concurrent with the Philistine 40-year occupation. As it says in Judges 15:20: "And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines 20 years."

As it is plain that the current Philistine occupation began before his birth (Jud. 13:1-5), Samson must have begun delivering Israel as a young man, say 18, (Jud. 13:25) for the 40 years to end with his destruction of their rulers at his death (Jud. 16:27).

Shamgar's deliverance is different in that he is mentioned in one verse only, of one deliverance only, and no years at all are given either him or the Philistine oppression at that time. Judges 3:30-4:2 states, "So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel, and the land had rest 80 years. And after him (Ehud) was Shamgar, the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines 600 men with an ox goad, and he also delivered Israel. And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord when Ehud was dead, and the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin, King of Canaan…". So this was concurrent with or just after Ehud, and before Jabin, the timing of which event is immaterial to a timeline.

The reason I mention Shamgar here is that he (as well as Samson) are used as examples for the theory that the judges did not always rule consecutively. But as we have seen with Samson, the scripture reveals to us that Samson's judging was during the Philistine oppression, which is stated explicitly as 40 years, as well as his judging is explicitly stated to have been 20 years during that occupation.

As no years are given Shamgar or the Philistines after Ehud, this is a peculiar reference with no implications for theorizing that judges judged at the same time in different parts of Israel. A likely scenario would be a less than one-year incursion by the Philistines and an instance of a deliverance by Shamgar just before King Jabin's oppression, or anytime in the general 80-year rest period after Ehud's deliverance.

Lastly, there is the theory that because the number 40 is used often, the literal numbers should not be used at all whenever "40 years" or a multiple of it appears in scripture, but that this just refers to generations. However, this goes against all clear scriptural statements involving the number 40, such as David's 40 years of reign, which were 7 ½ years in Hebron and 33 in Jerusalem (2 Sam.5:4,5); and the 40 years in the wilderness, which were 2 to Kadesh and 38 to Canaan (Joshua 5:6; Deut.1:3,2:14). Besides which, there is no evidence in scripture that 40 years was ever thought of as an average generation.[17]

Samuel anoints Saul

The last judgeship, Samuel's term, is nowhere listed in scripture. Samuel acted as both prophet and judge, judging directly after Eli's death until Saul, and acting more as prophet during Saul's reign. 1 Sam. 7:15-16 establishes his role as judge during his independent judging before Saul: "And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. "

Samuel's time to Mizpeh has been deduced from the statement in 1 Sam.7:1-2 which says, "And the men of Kirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD. And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD." Notice that the lamenting is connected with the twenty year period. Verse 6 adds, "And they…fasted on that day, and said there, 'We have sinned against the LORD'."

Otherwise, it may be possible to say this verse is out of place and belongs later in the account. After about 2 years and some months into Saul's reign (ch.13:1), the next mention of it appears in ch. 14:18 that states, "And Saul said unto Ahiah, 'Bring hither the ark of God.' For the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel."[1] However, as some statements are out of order, such as the summary statements of Samuel's life being stated earlier in ch.7, dating the end of the 20 year comment in ch.7:2 is a matter of debate. Was it Samuel's victory at Mizpeh in ch.7, Saul's battle in ch.14, or David's bringing the ark to Jerusalem many years later?

Previously, in 1 Sam. 7:2, the text relates that the ark had been sitting 20 years at Kirjath- Jearim. It was brought there 7 months after Eli died and thus 7 months after Samuel's lone judgeship began. If Saul was the first to move it from KJ, then Samuel's judging until after Saul's second year would be the 20 years, and his independent judgeship would be set at 18 years, assuming Samuel + Saul= 40 years of Acts 13. (40-20yr7mo-2yr+~7mo= ~ 18years).[2] However, this could just have been a temporary move unrelated to the total stay at Kirjath-Jearim, just as David many years later moves it from KJ. Ussher makes the 20 years of the Ark at Kirjath Jearim terminate at Samuel's victory at Mizpah, but adds only one more year from Mizpah to Saul.[3] 1 Sam. 13:1 states, "Saul reigned one year, and when he had reigned 2 years over Israel…"

Alternately, *as it reads consecutively*, the account in 1 Samuel 7-8 does seem like more time is required. 1 Sam. 8:1,3 states, "And it came to pass when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel…and his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment" and then they asked for a king, whence Saul was chosen. A serial count of the judges from Othniel to Saul would add up to the 450 years stated for the judges in Acts 13:20 if we gave 28 years for Samuel's reign until Saul (see p.15). However a straight forward reading more consistent with Samuel's "old" age in 1 Samuel 8 and the time between the victory at Mizpah until Saul seems to need more time, unless Samuel was older when he began his independent judgeship; a real possibility, especially as we have no data for that date. He did start his term as prophet while Eli was still judge. Here are some models:

Samuel & Saul

98 60 38 86 58
Eli dies Sam to Saul Samuel Saul dies
Othniel Samuel 40 Mizpeh King dies Ishmael 35
__l_____422_____l__ _____20_____l___8___l____18_____l_____2_____l
David 30

98 50 38 88 60
Eli dies Sam to Saul Samuel Saul dies
Othniel Samuel 40 Mizpeh King dies Ishmael 35
__l_____422_____l__ _____20_____l___8___l____20_____l_____2_____l
David 30

98 60 38 86 78
Eli dies Sam to Saul Samuel Saul dies
Othniel Samuel 40 Mizpeh King dies Ishmael 35
__l_____422_____l__ _____20_____l___8___l____18_____l_____22_____l
David 30

98 60 38 88 60
Eli dies Sam to Saul Samuel Saul dies
Othniel Samuel 50 Mizpeh King dies Ishmael 35
__l_____422_____l__ ____10_ _____l___8 ___l____ 20 ___l_____2____l
David 30

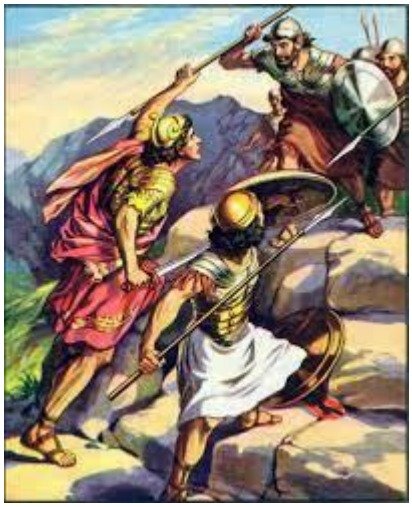
98 57 38 98 78
Eli dies Sam to Saul Samuel Saul dies
Othniel Samuel 37 Mizpeh King dies Ishmael 40
__l_____422_____l__ _____20_____l___1___l_____l_____l
……40……

These are Bishop Ussher's numbers in red. He doesn't mention when Samuel or Saul die. Note how old Saul would be at death., which is a problem for any 40 year reign for Saul. [19]

Saul
judge brings
Judges Samuel 70 ark 98 60
50 Mizpeh Samuel Saul dies 37
Ark taken 38 dies David king 40 Ark to
Othniel Eli dies Saul 30 Ishbosheth Jerusalem
l __ ___ __l___ _____ _l___l___l____l____ ___l____5_____l_____2_____l
422 l 20 8 2 18 2 --------- ----------7 1/2 yr----------

Scriptures: 1 Sam.3:20,4:1,11. 6:1. 13:1,14. 16:1. 8:1,22. 25:1. 31:6
2 Sam.2:9-11;4:4-5;5:7,9

The only problem with these models is the 40 years seemingly applied to Saul in Acts 13. However, the only way to give Saul 40 years is to make him young, ~20 when he becomes king, and place Jonathan's battle and 1Sam.13:2 much later in his reign. 1 Samuel 13:1-2 says, " Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand *men* of Israel; *whereof* two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent. And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines."



"And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armor, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for *there is* no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few." 1 Sam. 14:6

Even without the first verse of this paragraph with years mentioned, this account sounds like Jonathan was a grown warrior soon after Saul became king (say 20). And his 4th son Ishbosheth is at least 35 when Saul dies. Therefore Saul had to be much older, ~38, when he was crowned; which results in him dying at age 78. But as he was still able to fight to the end of his life, does it not seem more likely therefore, that he did not reign for 40 years, but about half that time?

What about Jonathan's age soon after the start of Saul's reign. The account has Jonathan fighting a battle the very next verse. To make Saul younger when he dies, many scholars question the account here, saying that a long period of time is passed in silence, but this would require an ~18 year gap in the account, and that is hard to fathom.

Some scholars' solution is to add numbers as needed in 1Sam.13:1 to make this gap.
In fact, many copies of the LXX do not even have this verse. For example, many commentators say that the passage in 1 Sam.13:1 is irrelevant to the discussion because they believe that two numerals have dropped out of this verse and that the statement, "Saul reigned one year" can only mean Saul was a year old when he became king."

As Saul did not become king at the age of one, they say his age has fallen out of the Massoretic text. For example, note the popular NAS, NIV, NLT, and Amp. readings which substitute"30 years" for "year" ("one year"-KJV) and "42 years"for "2 years" (not really translating here, but interpolating into the text their own ideas). The 1977 NAS has "40 years" for "year" and "30 years" for "2 years." How can one trust translators that do this?

They also argue that the following statement: "after he had reigned 2 years over Israel, Saul chose him 3000 men of Israel," does not refer to this time, but rather his total time of reign. As 2 years is too low, they posit a missing letter here, possibly a letter representing the number 20 (as we know Hebrew numerals were sometimes represented in Maccabean times by letters), and say this verse refers to the length of his reign (22 years). The main reason for postulating such a drastic rendering is, according to Kiel, "according to the standing custom in the history of the kings, it opens with a statement of the age of the king when he began to reign, and the number of years that his reign lasted.

If, for example, we compare the form and contents of this verse with 2 Sam 2:10,4 1 Kings 14:21;22:42, 2 Kings 8:26…there can be no doubt that our verse was also intended to give that same account concerning Saul…"[4] However, postulating this large amount of error in this verse is hard to prove, and I consider the case that Jamieson has made for 1 Sam.13:1, as rendered in the KJV, sound (that the 11th and 12th chapters represent the principal events of this first year, and ch.13 describes events in his 2nd year).

Davis states, "The Hebrew text reads as follows: ben sanah Saul bemalko usete sanim malak 'al yisrael."[5] "The singular form for year, sanah, in the first portion of this verse shows that there was only one year spoken of here (note the plural form, sanim (years), in the second part). As Saul was not one year old, this was not talking of his age, but his length of reign to this point in the narrative. Even theorizing that a letter or numeral had dropped out, as the singular form for year, 'sanah' is used here, the only number that could have dropped out would be the number *one".*

Jamieson adds, “Saul reigned one year-*lit*., a son of a year (was) Saul in ‘reigning;’ i.e., he had been a king for a year. The transactions recorded in the 11th and 12th chapters were the principal incidents comprised in the first year of Saul’s reign; and the events about to be described in this passage happened in the second year.

As stated, some writers however regard the text as mutilated and defective in this first verse. The Hexapla of Origen has this Greek reading – ‘Saul was 30 years old when he was made king, and he reigned – years in Israel,’ the blank number being filled up by Houbigant, Wall, and others as forty.”[6] I think it far easier to believe that the verse was written as the Mass. text has it, and should be rendered as the KJV and NKJ have it, instead of adding the numerals 30 and 40, based on a few late LXX manuscripts and conjecture.[6a]

Also, Saul's length of reign is nowhere stated in the Old Testament. According to1Sam. 13:1,2, after he reigns 2 years, his son Jonathan is already a grown warrior in command of 1000 men. It does say in 1 Sam 9:2 that Saul was a "young" man; however, this was obviously a relative term here. Note that Caleb was 38 when they spied out the land (Joshua 14:7,10). Joshua was likely about 5 years older than Caleb at 43, and he was called “young” at this time (Num. 11:28). He died before Caleb at the age of 110 (Josh.13:1; 23:1,2). Therefore, “young” here also could be a relative term or imply, “a choice person” as the Vulgate renders it in 1 Sam.9:2.

Doddridge comments, "Saul was then in his prime (perhaps about 35) and justifies the prudence of Pagnin, Montanus, Munster, and the Vulgate who render it "electus," a choice person, without determining anything concerning his youth, in which they also agree with the Syric and Arabic Versions."[7] Saul's fourth son, Ishbosheth, is 40 years old when he takes over the kingdom at his father's death (2Sam. 2:10, 1 Chron. 8:33).

As for the comment of Saul's "second year" in 1Sam.13:1, Gill says "some (Montanus) interpret them, 'Saul had a son of a year old when he began to reign,' Ishbosheth; and who was forty years of age when his father died."

Therefore, if Saul were 25 when crowned and has Ishbosheth at 26, and Jonathan earlier at 22, a full 40 year reign with Saul's death at 65 fits into a reasonable timeline, assuming Jonathan's attack on the philistines was 17 years after Saul's anointing; but how likely is this as the account records this as the next event.

Corson states, "If Saul only reigned 2 years and Jonathan was able to lead troops at that time, then Saul had to be old enough to have quite a grown son. If Saul had fathered Jonathan when he was only 18, then Saul could have become king at 36 and had an 18-year-old son. Jonathan could well have led troops at 20 years old. If Saul reigned 40 years and became king at 36, he would have been 76 when he died. If Ishbosheth was 40 when Saul died, he could have been born when Saul was 36 and king. Jonathan would have been 18 years older than Ishbosheth, with 2 brothers in-between."[8]

Jones argues for a 40-year reign thus: "The giving of Ish-bosheth's (Esh-Baal) age as being 40 (2 Sam 2:10) when his father died is a chronological key. *Since he is not listed* as one of Saul's sons when Saul began to reign (1 Sam 14:49), but is included in the complete listings (1 Chron 8:33, 9:39)."[9] Jones states that therefore he must be the youngest and been born after Saul became king, thereby indicating at least a 40 year reign for Saul.

His argument however is based on Ishbosheth not being listed in vs. 49, but as Keil remarks, "Only three of his sons are mentioned, namely those who fell with him, according to ch.31:2 in the war with the Philistines…In these passages in the Chronicles, there is a fourth mentioned, Esh-Baal, i.e.the one who is called Ishbosheth in 2 Sam.2:8 etc., and who was set up by Abner as the antagonist of David.

The reason why he is not mentioned here it is impossible to determine." Jones thinks he knows why (that he wasn't born yet), but it should be noted that these last verses in 1 Sam.14 are historical statements made after Saul's death, regardless of the time setting of 1 Sam.14.
Verse 52 says, "And there was sore war against the Philistines *all the days of Saul*…" even though the account of Saul's life continues. Also, Michal, Saul's youngest daughter who marries David, is listed. Going by listings, does he presume to have David marrying a much older woman? (Ishbosheth is 35 when David is 30, Michal supposedly already born before Ishbosheth listed; therefore, Michal marries David, being his senior by 10 years+)!

2Sa 1:1 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag;

2Sa 1:4 And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.

2Sa 2:1 And it came to pass after this, that David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the LORD said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron.

2Sa 2:2 So David went up thither, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail Nabal's wife the Carmelite.

2Sa 2:3 And his men that *were* with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron.

2Sa 2:4 And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, *That* the men of Jabeshgilead *were they* that buried Saul.

2Sa 2:5 And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabeshgilead, and said unto them, Blessed *be* ye of the LORD, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your lord, *even* unto Saul, and have buried him.

2Sa 2:6 And now the LORD shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.

2Sa 2:7 Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.

2Sa 2:8 But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim;

2Sa 2:9 And made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel.

2Sa 2:10 Ishbosheth Saul's son *was* forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David.

2Sa 2:11 And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

So here is the argument that I believe best explains Ishmael's 2 year reign during David's 7 1/2 year reign:*Kiel comments, "Length of the reigns of Ishbosheth over Israel, and David at Hebron.* The age of Ishbosheth is given, as is generally the case at the commencement of a reign. He was forty years old when he began to reign, and reigned *two years;* whereas David was king at Hebron over the house of Judah *seven years and a half*. We are struck with this difference in the length of the two reigns; and it cannot be explained, as Seb. Schmidt, Clericus, and others suppose, on the simple assumption that David reigned two years at Hebron over *Judah*, namely up to the time of the murder of Ishbosheth, and then five years and a half over *Israel*, namely up to the time of the conquest of Jerusalem: for this is at variance with the plain statement in the text, that "David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah seven years and a half."

The opinion that the two years of Ishbosheth's reign are to be reckoned up to the time of the war with David, because Abner played the principal part during the other five years and a half that David continued to reign at Hebron, is equally untenable. We may see very clearly from 2 Samuel 3-5 not only that Ishbosheth was king to the time of his death, which took place after that of Abner, but also that after both these events David was anointed king over Israel in Hebron by all the tribes, and that he then went directly to attack Jerusalem, and after conquering the citadel of Zion, chose that city as his own capital. The short duration of Ishbosheth's reign can only be explained, therefore, on the supposition that he was not made king, as David was, immediately after the death of Saul, but after the recovery by Abner of the land which the Philistines had taken on this side the Jordan, which may have occupied five years."[9a]

So we see that there are good explanations for all the time periods save one. The 40 years assigned to Saul in Acts 13. Giving him the full 40 solves many problems, but makes him old, ~78 when he dies. And he is still a fighting man then. It is possible though.

The alternative explanation is that the 40 years refer to BOTH Samuel and Saul's reigns together (so Beza, Bengel, Grotius, Calvin, Brenius, Woltzogenius, Limborch, etc.). Many critics suppose that the term of 40 years stated in Acts 13 includes also the time in which Samuel judged the people. The question becomes, can or should Acts 13:21 be honestly translated that way. Barnes says that "*by the space of* 40 years" can be rendered "*during* 40 years," (during a 40-year period which began with Samuel) and adds:

"Josephus says (Ant.b,6 ch.14,9) that he reigned 18 years while Samuel was alive, and 22 years after his death. But Dr. Doddridge has shown that this cannot be correct, and that he probably reigned, *as some copies of Josephus have it*, but two years after the death of Samuel. This supposition does not violate the text in this place, and may be probable."[10] Commenting on Josephus, Doddridge says that, "The true reading is that of Epiphanius, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Eutychius, which leaves out (the Greek letters spelling "two"), and twenty, so as to assign him but two years after the prophet's death."[11]

This model then has Saul reigning 20 years to Samuel's death and 2 after making the 40 years of Acts13:21 (18+20+2), thus placing Saul's reign at 22 years (40-18), which puts Samuel's full term at about 38 years, if we allow only 18 for Samuel to Saul (18+20).

Note that Paul says "And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land by lot, and after that he gave unto them judges about the space of 450 years until Samuel the prophet". As noted earlier, Samuel acted as both prophet and judge; he judged the first stage in his career and served as prophet primarily in the latter stage when Saul was king. Paul continues: "and afterward they desired a king". After what did they desire a king?

> We see in 1 Sam.8:5 that it was not after Samuel's total career, but after Samuel had been judging a number of years (20+) when they desired a king; therefore, Paul probably was adding Samuel's reign as sole judge within the 450 years; Samuel's term before Saul was king, 28 years, being reflected in the next verse with the clause "by the space of 40 years." If both their reigns= 40 years, this gives Saul a short reign of only 12 years; which wont work with Ishmael's age at his father's death, whether 35 or 40 years.

As Kiel states, "Even under Saul, however, Samuel continued to the very end of his life to labor as the prophet of the Lord for the well-being of Israel, although he laid down his office of judge as soon as Saul had been elected king." [12]

Also, consider that Samuel was already old before Saul became king (1Sam. 8:1), and lives long into Saul's reign (1Sam.25:1), within a few years of Saul's death (1 Sam.28:3-31:6). His sons were already grown men who had a reputation for perverting judgment, before the elders asked for a king. It might seem unlikely for Samuel to have lived 35-38 years into Saul's reign, but 1 Sam.4:15 tells us Eli was 98 when he died; and we read that Samuel was very old when he died, so Samuel could have lived a similar lifespan.

Doddridge comments, "The chief consideration which determined me is this: Samuel is expressly said to have judged Israel all the days of his life; (1 Sam.7:15), but are we sure that he lived the greater part (probably by far the greater part) of the 40 years preceding Saul's death; for David was but 30 years old when he began to reign over Judah (2 Sam. 5:4), which was not till after Saul was slain; and Samuel did not only anoint him (at which time we cannot suppose David to have been less than 15 years old), but lived a considerable time after, that is, about the time of David's going to Paran (1 Sam.25:1), which seems to have been but a little before his journey in the country of the Philistines, where he dwelt only a year and 4 months before the battle at Gilboa, in which Saul fell (1 Sam 27:7); a circumstance that greatly favors the opinion which (as Drusius observes) so commonly prevailed among the Jews, that Saul survived Samuel but little more than 2 years."[13]

David plays for Saul

The problem is that the age of Saul's son Ishbosheth seems to require a longer reign for Saul. 2 Sam. 2:10 states, "Ishbosheth Saul's son *was* forty years old when he began to reign over Israel." This was 5 years after Saul's death. And Saul is said to be a young man when he was anointed king. (1 Sam.9:2) So if Saul were really young, say 20, this fits very well with a straightforward reading of Acts 13:21 of Saul's 40 year reign but not well with a grown warrior Jonathan early in his reign, unless Saul was older both when he is anointed king and when he dies. Then a 40 year reign could work.

One problem is at the period of time the ark was in Kirjath-jearim. 2 Sam.5:4-5 states, **"And it came to pass, from the day when the ark rested in Kirjath-jearim, that a long time elapsed, even twenty years."** Some make this the total time the ark was there, and so try to fit much of Samuel's judgeship, Saul's reign, and David's 7 years in Hebron all into this period. David became king at 30 and reigns for 40 years total.

The Cambridge bible commentary states,"Twenty years was not, as the E. V. seems to imply, the whole duration of the Ark′s sojourn at Kirjath-jearim, but the time that elapsed before the reformation now to be recorded.″[14] Or, this could be the time until it was moved next by Saul in the second year of his reign, but the sense seems to be at that time.

Kiel submits this paraphraze: "And it came to pass, when the days multiplied from the time that the ark remained at Kirjath-jearim, and grew to twenty years, and the whole house of Israel mourned after Jehovah, that Samuel said,″[15] etc. So the twenty year corundum disappears, and has no bearing on Saul′s reign, but it may bear on Samuel′s reign.

David brings Ark to Jerusalem

1Ki 1:1 "Now king David was old *and* stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he got no heat."1Ch 29:28 "And he (David) died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead." 1Sa 31:3 "And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers." Saul did not die by a warrior's sword. So Saul was a mighty warrior until his death. He did not die old and sick in bed like David did at age 70. Note, that at that time, David's generation at age 70 was said to be "in a good old age full of days;" also "old and stricken in years." So Saul was likely younger than 70 when he died; probably around 60 at most, as many commentators believe.

In the end, the key to determining Saul's reign is not 1 Sam.13:1 anyway, but the ages of David, Jonathan, and Ishbosheth. We note that Ishmael does not become king until 5 years after his father's death, and rules for the last 2 years of David's 7.5 year reign in Hebron.

1 Sam.2:10 tells us that Ishmael was 40 when he began to reign; making him 35 at Saul's death. (2Sam1:1; 2:4-11;5:4). After Ishbosheth's 2 year reign, David was crowned king over both Israel and Judah and moved to Jerusalem. So David is 30 when he begins to reign in Hebron, when Ishbosheth is 35. Jonathan, Saul's first son, is a grown man at the start of Saul's reign (1 Sam 13:2). As it is likely David and Jonathan were close in age, this does not leave room for Saul's reign to be 40 years. This also agrees with the model of taking Saul's reign together with Samuel's in Acts 13:21.

Oakes comments, "**If Saul reigned for 22 years, David is about 10 years younger than Jonathan, and is less than 10 years old when Saul takes the throne. Ish-bosheth could be nearly 40 when he took the throne (depending how long after Jonathan he was born), fitting with 2 Samuel 2. Jonathan would be about 35 when Mephibosheth was born. Presuming Samuel anoints David at around 20 years of age, he would have been at least 60 at this point of time, a realistic figure. This reign-length also fits with Josephus' information, though not of course with Paul's as recorded in Acts. Saul would be around 60 at Gilboa**."[16] Actually it would agree with the "forty years," if we give Samuel 18 years before Saul, and count his reign with Saul's, instead of as part of the 450 years.

Saul dies

Rawlinson adds, "But the two facts, that all the three sons of Saul mentioned in 1 Samuel 14:49 were old enough to go with him to the battle of Mount Gilboa, where they were slain; and that Ishbosheth, his successor, was forty years of age when his father died, effectually dispose of the idea that Saul's was a very short reign."[17] This is true even if Ishbosheth were 35 then, as seen earlier. Here are some models on how to interpret Acts 13:
Models : "about the space of 450 years" =-**From initial conquest (yr.7) to Samuel the prophet** (perhaps not his judgeship)

1Sa 3:19-21 "And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel *was* established *to be* a prophet of the LORD. And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD." This was while Eli was still judge. Josephus(Ant.5.10.4) says that he began prophesying at age 12(say 20th year of Eli, year 402 of judges?) = 450 (giving 40 for Joshua +elders+Cushan's 8 yrs.)

-**From initial conquest 7 years after Jericho to Eli's death when Samuel's judgeship begins**. Alford says, "Taking the words as they stand, *no other sense* can be given to them, than that the time of the judges lasted 450 years. The dative ἔτεσιν (see ch. 8:11) implies the duration of the period between ταῦτα (the division of the land), and Samuel the prophet, inclusive."[18] From Othniel to Judge Samuel (eli's death), serial count = 422 years. If we add the 6 years of conquest to 8 years of Cushan's oppression, this leaves 14 years for the rest of the conquest of Joshua and the elders who outlived him. = 450 years. The problem with this model is that this makes their total time in the land prior to the judges at only 28 years.

-**From Othniel to Saul**= 443 years (422 judges +20 to Mizpeh+1 to Saul- Ussher)[19]

Models: "by the space of 40 years" =
-**Saul reigns 40 years**
This makes Jonathan about 28 years older than David**.** That doesn't work, unless one posits a very large gap in the scriptural account, just after Saul becomes king to Jonathan's battle in 1 Sam. 13.

Samuel's reign as 40 years.
Poole states, "'by the space of forty years,' are to be joined with the foregoing verse, and the other foregoing words in the verse read with a parenthesis: and thus they show how long Samuel the prophet (as he is here called) exercised his prophetical office, which was the space here mentioned, partly before Saul was anointed king, and in part afterward."[20]

-**Saul + Samuel as judge = 40 years**, Ussher has 21 Samuel, so Saul = 19. (most say Samuel dies 2 years prior to Saul's death, so that gives Samuel 17 years with Saul.)

Eli hears about the Ark taken

1 Kings 6:1

1 Kings 6:1 states: "And it came to pass in the 480th year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the 4th year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Ziv, which is the 2nd month, that he began to build the house of the Lord."

Sir Robert Anderson, a century ago, comments: “This statement, than which none could seemingly be more exact, has sorely puzzled chronologers. By some it has been condemned as a forgery, by others it has been dismissed as a blunder, but all have agreed in rejecting. Moreover, scripture itself appears to clash with it.”[1]

In more recent times however, most Christians have accepted the 480 years uncritically. Corson adds, “I can only conclude that most conservatives who have sought to become conversant with Israelite history have fixated on the number 480 because it is simple, direct, and saves the trouble of studying the bible’s chronology…”[2]

Scholars either: 1. Take the number 480 at face value and try to make this number fit with Acts 13:20 and the numbers in the book of judges by saying that some of the judges reigned at the same time in different locales, and that Paul's statement in Acts 13 should be reworded so that the 450 years do not apply to the judges. 2. Make the 480-year time span only part of the period referred to, only counting the years when Israel was in "self determination." 3. Declare the number "480" a copying error. 4. Believe the first part of verse 1 was added later (an inter-polation).

As noted previously, the wording in the book of judges and Acts 13 make it difficult to reconcile with only 480 years for this period. The theory of various judges’ reigns overlapping in different locales is based primarily on this questionable verse in I K.6:1 and a possible minority text reading of Acts 13:21, but the wording in both Paul's statement and the book of Judges is serially expressed and add up to about 600 years. [3]

Acts 13:20

"And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet."

Meyers comments, "'And afterwards—after this division of the land among the Israelites He gave them, during about 450 years, judges...until Samuel.' The dative ἔτεσι τετρακ. is dative of the time, during which something happens (comp. Acts 8:11) ...

But the 450 years are in contradiction with 1 Kings 6:1, where the fourth year of Solomon's reign, the year of the building of the temple, is placed 480 (LXX.: 440 years after the Exodus). Paul here follows the chronology entirely different from 1 Kings 6:1, which also is followed by Josephus."[4]

For Paul's 450 years to Samuel to read straight-forward, we have to start with Othniel's judgeship and end with Samuel's judgeship to Saul's anointing as king. So, with a serial count, this makes 422 years until Samuel. This is the total period of time in which they ruled as the dative implies, and so includes the times of oppression. So, the Judges to Samuel=422 years. If we include Samuel til Saul at 28 years, this=450 years; which agrees with both Paul's account and a serial count of the judges. The time of wilderness was 40 yrs, conquest was 7 years, the rest of the time of Joshua 18, and elders and backslide 25, the total time til Cushan, as we have seen, must have been about 50 years. So if we give Saul 40 years we have: (40+50+8+450+40 Saul+40 David + 3 Solomon=631). So, the real time spoken of in 1Kings 6:1: the span Exodus to the Temple, would be about 631 years; Josephus makes 612. This also pushes the date of the exodus back 20 years, and questions how likely that is.

Further, the theory that the number 480 represents only the years of peace and not oppression has no logical basis in scripture; so how was 480 calculated? Jones states, "The years of servitude (114 in Anstey's numbering), which they maintain God didn't count, are subtracted from the 594 in order to obtain 480 and thus defend the 1 Kings 6:1 passage."[4]

The only other conservative way of reconciling the number 480 in 1 Kings 6, is to take the number of years of rest in the periods for the Judges as the total period of time spanned for both the oppression and the rest.

Jones states, "For example, the verses relating to Judge Ehud are interpreted as meaning that due to disobedience, God raised up Ehud as His instrument to judge and deliver her and then the land had rest. A break or pause in thought is construed as following after the word "rest" (vs 30) so that the next two words are taken as a recapitulation whereby the total time elapsed for the whole story (Jud. 3:12-20) was fourscore or 80 years."[5] It is reading the words "And the land had rest 40 years" as "the land had rest in the 40th year" (Jud.3:11); "the land had rest 80 years" as "the land had rest in the 80th year (Jud. 3:30).

This theory has the advantage of reconciling Jephthah's 300 years with the longer time of conquest the narrative seems to require under Joshua, Caleb, and the elders who outlived them. It also maintains 480 literal years in 1 Kings 6:1 and fits with some archaeological evidence (see the Armana letters). However, the straightforward wording of Judges and Acts 13 conflict with this model.

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The first half of 1Kings 6:1 could be a later interpolation. It should be noted that this account of Solomon beginning to build the temple is a parallel account. I Kings 6:1 is parallel with 2 Chron. 3:2. **If the first half of I K. 6:1 were genuine, one would expect such an important statement like the length of time from the Exodus til then to be in the parallel account too. But 2 Chron 3:2 just reads similar to I K.6:1b (without any mention of this era)**: "And he began to build in the 2nd day of the 2nd month in the 4th year of his reign." 1 Kings 6:1b reads, "...in the 4th year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the 2nd month, that he began to build the house of the Lord."

Kiel states, " In 2Ch_3:2 וַיָּחֶל לִבְנוֹת is repeated in order to fix the time of the building. In 1Ki_6:1 the time is fixed by its relation to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. בַּשֵּׁנִי, which the older commentators always understood of the second day of the month, is strange. Elsewhere the day of the month is always designated by the cardinal number with the addition of לַחֹדֶשׁ or יוֹם, the month having been previously given. Berth therefore considers בַּשֵּׁנִי to be a gloss which has come into the text by a repetition of הַשֵּׁנִי, since the LXX and Vulg. have not expressed it."[6]

Spence remarks: "In the second day. The word "day" as italicized in our Authorized Version type is of course not found in the Hebrew text. Several manuscripts fail also to show the other words of this clause, viz. "In the second;" and that they are probably spurious derives confirmation from the fact that neither the Arabic nor Syriac Versions, nor the Septuagint nor Vulgate translations, produce them.

In the second month, in the fourth year.
Reading the verse, therefore, as though it began thus, the most interesting but doubtful question of fixing an exact chronology for what preceded Solomon's reign is opened. In our present text there is little sign of anything to satisfy the offers to do so, if only again to disappoint the more grievously. "[6a]

Letter	Value	Letter	Value
א'	1	ל'	30
ב'	2	מ'	40
ג'	3	נ'	50
ד'	4	ס'	60
ה'	5	ע'	70
ו'	6	פ'	80
ז'	7	צ'	90
ח'	8	ק'	100
ט'	9	ר'	200
י'	10	ש'	300
כ'	20	ת'	400

Also, it interesting that the completion of the temple is worded thus: "In the 4th year was the foundation of the house of the Lord laid, in the month Zif. And in the 11th year, in the month Bul, which is the 8th month, was the house finished..."vs 37-38. [7]

Origen, c.230 AD, though not quoting, talks of this verse without mentioning the first half, but does say earlier, with no justification; that the time from the exodus to the temple was 340 years).[8]

Rawlinson states, "It is not the **manner** of Old Testament writers thus to date events from an era, an idea which appears to have first occurred to the Greeks **temp.** Thucydides (writing in 411BC)."[9]

It has been noted that 480 is 16 x 30, and may stand for the 16 generations from Moses to David, listed in 1 Chron. 15:16,19, at 30 years each. Or it could be a memorization device such as Mathew's grouping of 14 generations for each period of Jewish history, though the true number of generations was known to be greater (Matt.1:17). First, it will be noted that there are only 41 names in Matthew's list of 3 groups of 14 names, Jeconiah apparently counted twice, possibly because Babylonian captivity, not a person, was thought of as the dividing event between the 2nd and 3rd periods, and Jeconiah was on both sides of this.

Of the three periods of history which Matthew lists, we only know the complete list of the kings period, and we know that a block of precisely three kings was omitted here: Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, who reigned between Joram and Uzziah (2 Kings 8:25, 11:21,12:1,14:1;2 Chron.22:1,24:1,25:1). [10]

Luke's list for this third period has 22 names, much more than Matthew's 14 names. Brown comments on Matt.1: “Such artificial aids to memory were familiar to the Jews, and much larger gaps than these are found in some of the old testament genealogies. In Ezra 7:1-5, no fewer than 6 generations of the priesthood are omitted, as will appear by comparing it with 1 Chron. 6:3-15.” [11]

Rawlinson notes: “The curtailment of generations by the omission of names was a common practice of the Jews.” He cites Ezra 7:1-5 as a prime example: “It gives no more than 16 generations between Ezra and Aaron, whereas the Number of generations between Zerubbabel and Nashon, prince of Judah in Aaron’s time, (Num.1:7,2:3) was 26 (1 Chron.2:10-15; 9:11; Neh. 12:10).”[12]

Not all MSS have I Kings 6:1. Hammond says that, “grave doubts are entertained as to its genuineness. Lord A. Hervey says it is “manifestly erroneous.”[21] Rawlinson also considers it to be an interpolation into the sacred text: “And it is to be observed, 1. That the LXX reads 440 instead of 480 years - a discrepancy which is suspicious, and argues some amount of incertitude." 2. Origen quotes this verse without these words (Comm. in S. Johann ii,20). 3. They would seem to have been unknown to Josephus, Clem., Alex., and others...5. It is difficult to reconcile this statement with the other chronological notices both of the Old and New Testaments.”[22] Allis states, “According to Finegan, the figure 480 “appears to be a late addition to the text” and it “may bear the marks of an artificial reckoning…”[23](16 gen.x30 years?) Ellicott states, "In the LXX., 440 is read for 480, possibly by an interchange of two similar Hebrew letters."[24]

As to the months involved, Ex. 13:4 says, “This day you came out in the month Abib.” Abib (Nissan) comes just before Zif (Iyar); and 1 Kings 6:1b has, “in the 4th year of Solomon’s reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the 2nd month, that he began to build the house of the Lord.” And the chronology continues in 1Ki 6:37-8: “In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the LORD laid, in the month Zif: And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which *is* the eighth month, was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it.”

Smith adds, “Moreover, when the text is examined, it immediately appears that this date of 480 years is both unnecessary and quite out of place. The reference to the Exodus is gratuitous, and alien to all the other notes of time, which refer merely to Solomon's accession. **If it is left out, the text will be quite perfect without it, and will agree exactly with the *resume* in ver. 37, 38, and also with the parallel passage in 2 Chr. iii. 2. The evidence therefore of its being an interpolation is wonderfully strong.**

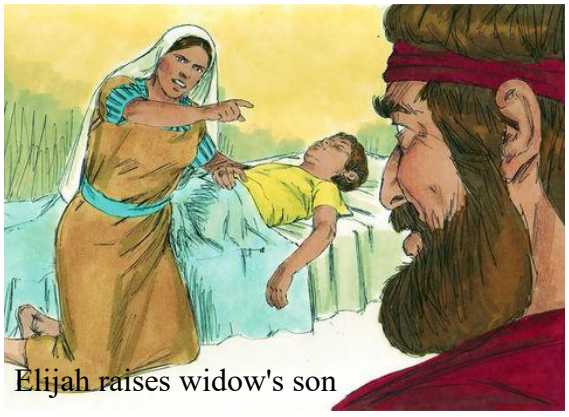
But if so, it must have been inserted by a professed chronologist, whose object was to reduce the Scripture history to an exact system of chronology… a conclusion somewhat confirmed by the alterations and omissions of these dates in the LXX. It is likely therefore, that we shall find traces of the same hand in other parts of the books…”[25a] Concerning the LXX rendering, “ Dr Gooding has shown that “the LXX of 1 Kings has a tendency to correct in a pedantic way any chronology with which the translator or reviser perceived there to be a slight problem.”[25b]

Kiel continues, "Moreover, the introduction to our chapter has something annalistic in its tone; and at this early period, it would be undoubtedly well known, and in a case like the present a careful calculation would be made, how long a time had elapsed since the most memorable period of the Israelitish nation had passed by. Compare with this ED. Preuss (Die Zeitrechnung der LXX, p. 74 sqq.), who has endeavored with much greater probability to show that the alteration made by the LX into 440 rests upon nothing more than a genealogical *combination*.”[25]

Warington states concerning the numbers in the Old Testament, “There is little doubt but that numbers were originally represented in Hebrew, not as now by the names of the numbers in full, but simply by the letters of the alphabet taken in order…”[31]

Barnes adds, “Chronologists have based entirely the “received chronology” upon this verse. But the text itself is not free from suspicion. ...For the years actually set down amount to at least 580...Again in the New Testament (Acts 13:20), St. Paul (according to the received text) reckons the period from the division of Canaan among the tribes in the 6th year of Joshua (Joshua 14), to Samuel the prophet at 450 years, which would make the interval between the commencement of the temple to be 579 years.”[26] Of course that is debatable whether he starts his 450 years of judges after the 7 year conquest.

Josephus also makes this period longer than 480 years. He states(93AD): "Solomon began to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign, on the second month....592 years after the Exodus out of Egypt." (Ant.8.3.1, p.174); He says later (c.100AD), "...Solomon himself built that temple 612 years after the Jews came out of Egypt." [27,28] His later correction seems to be nearer the true time that elapsed.


Elijah raises widow's son

Therefore, if one indeed reckons from the 6th year in the land in Acts 13, this model would leave about 20 years for further conquest and rest, and the period Exodus to the Temple would add up to 579-580 years and support the argument of a single character copy error in 1 Kings 6:1, from the symbol for 500 to 400.[29]

Numerical copy errors

1 Kings 4:26 "40000 stalls" with 2 Chron 9:25 "4000 stalls"
2 Sam. 8:4 "700 horsemen" with 1 Chron.18:4 "7000 horsemen"
2 Sam.10:18 "700 charioteers" with 1 Chron.19:18 "7000 charioteers"
1 Kings 7:26 "2000 baths" with 2 Chron.4:5 "3000 baths"
2 Kings 25:19 "5" persons with Jeremiah 52:25 "7" persons
(See Haley for more)[14]

Albert Barnes states: "Mistakes are so easily made in transcribing numbers where letters are used instead of writing the words at length, that we are not to wonder at such errors."[15] Haley adds: "For when ב denotes 2, ב 20, ב 50, & פ 80; when ר stands for4, ר for 4000, ר for 200, and ק for 400, mistakes in numbers, especially when the numeral letters were blurred or unskillfully written, would be *inevitable."*[16]

Raphael adds, "…each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet has, in addition to its phonemic value, also a numerical value:
(alef=1, bet=2, yod=10, kaf=20, qof=100, resh=200, shin=300, and tav=400). In traditional Hebrew literature, down to the 20th century, no other numerical notation was used. Numbers of chapters and of pages, measurements, amounts, years, and days of the month, and so on, were always written in letters of the Hebrew alphabet."[17]Finegan says, "Numbers which exceed the limits of the sequence of letters are formed by addition of characters."

For example, there are multiple letters representing hundreds after the number 400. 400 is represented by the letter 'Taw', but 500 is represented by the letter for 100, 'Qoth', followed by the letter for 5, which is 'He'."[18] (except thousands which are represented by the units with two dots above)[18a]

Some scholars say Israel did not substitute letters for numbers, but wrote them out as full words. However, there is good evidence their neighbors did. Pope states, "At Ugarit, the numerals in the literary texts are always spelled out, but in the administrative documents, they are written ideo-graphically with Sumero-Akkadian symbols. The old Aramaic inscriptions from Elephantine, and some Phonecian inscriptions spell out the numerals and also use figures. In the Eshmunazar inscription, the date is given in both words and in figures.

On the Aramaic lion weights from Nineveh (8th-7th centuries BC), the numbers are doubly represented in words and figures. In S.Arabic inscriptions also, the numbers are sometimes written in full and sometimes represented by figures. It seems likely that Israel would also have used symbols since their neighbors did."[18b]

Kiel states: "Solomon had 4000 racks of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 riding horses," which were kept partly in Jerusalem and partly in cities specially built for the purpose (1Ki_9:19; 1Ki_10:26; 2Ch_1:14; 2Ch_9:25). אַרְבָּעִים (40) is an old copyist's error for אַרְבָּעָה (4), which we find in the parallel passage 2Ch_9:25, and as we may also infer from 1Ki_10:26 and 2Ch_1:14, since according to these passages Solomon had 1400 רֶכֶב or war chariots. For 4000 horses are a very suitable number for 1400 chariots, though not 40,000, since two draught horses were required for every war chariot, and one horse may have been kept as a reserve.[19]

Note that all the numerical copy errors cited are errors involving only one digit. Of course, we only know the errors because we have other accounts in other areas of scripture to compare with; and we can almost always tell what the true number should be. The principle of 2 Cor. 13:1 (although not speaking of this) can also be applied here: "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." 1 Kings 6:1 is the only area or verse in the bible which supports 480 years for this period.

Other examples of probable scribal errors in chronological statements can be seen comparing the 22 years of Ahaziah in 2 Kings 8:26 with 42 years stated for him in 2 Chron. 22:2. Also note the likely copy error in 2 Sam. 15:7, "And it came to pass after 40 years that Absalom said to the king…" which occurred not long after he "dwelt 2 full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face."(2 Sam.14:28)

In fact, in the next verse, he speaks of the vow he vowed, "while I abode at Geshur" and he was at Geshur just before returning to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 13:38). Therefore, this "40 years" is probably in fact 4 years, referring either to 4 years from his return to Jerusalem, or to 4 years from the last chronological event, his reconciliation with David.

That the errors were not in the original MSS is incontestable. Haley continues; "But as elsewhere intimated, these mistakes, which we find in considerable numbers, touch no vital point of scripture.

No precept, promise, or doctrine is in the least degree impaired by them; nor do they militate against any well balanced theory of inspiration."[20] Therefore, Acts 13 and the book of Judges, should be our guides for this period, as they agree; and a single numerical copying error in the one verse that does not agree is very possible.

Scholars though have questioned that Israel ever used symbols or letters to stand for numbers, because we have no manuscripts that do so. M.H.Pope states, "The fact that we have no evidence for the early (pre-Maccabean) use of numbers among the Hebrews does not necessarily mean that they did not have and use some system of figures. At Ugarit the numerals in the literary texts are always spelled out, but in the administrative documents they are written ideolographically, with Sumero-Akkadian symbols. The old Aramaic inscriptions from Zenjirli, the Aramaic documents from Elephantine, and some Phoenician inscriptions spell out the numerals and also use figures.

In the Eshmunazar Inscription, the date is given in both words and figures. On the Aramaic lion weights from Nineveh, (8th-7thc.BC), the numbers are doubly represented in words and figures. In South Arabic inscriptions also, the numbers are sometimes written in full and sometimes represented by figures. It seems likely that Israel would also have used symbols since their neighbors did."[29a]

We know this is true at the times of the Maccabees from inscriptions on their coins. 1 Kings, along with 2 Kings, according to the Talmud, was compiled by Jeremiah at the time of Babylonian captivity, about 400 years prior to the Maccabean period.

Smith says, “Like most oriental nations, it is probable that the Hebrews in their written calculations made use of the letters of the alphabet. That they did so in post-Babylonian times we have conclusive evidence in the Maccabean coins; and it is highly probable that this was the case also in earlier times.

Thus, Exodus to the Temple we have these models:

Wilderness	40	40	40	40
Initial Conquest	7	7	7	7
Conquest/Rest	43	43	43	43
Cushan	8	8	8	8
Judges to Sam.	422	422	422	422
Samuel to Saul	20	18	18	20
Saul	40	22	40	20
David	40	40	40	40
Solomon	3	3	3	3
	623	603	621	603

But though on the one hand, it is certain in all existing MSS of the Hebrew text of the OT the numerical expressions are written at length, yet, on the other, the variations in the several versions between themselves and from the Hebrew text, added to the evident inconsistencies in numerical statement between certain passages of that text itself, seem to prove that some shorter mode of writing was originally in vogue, liable to be misunderstood by copyists and translators. These variations appear to have proceeded from the alphabetic method of writing numbers."[32] For example, Stuart's Hebrew Grammar states, "Several letters… bear a great resemblance to each other…. The reader will observe that, if the left hand perpendicular of "he" be accidentally omitted or blurred, we have "daleth"left, thus ד ה ." (Daleth (dalet) is the fourth letter (4), he (hay) the fifth letter (5) of the Hebrew alphabet).[33]

Peter David adds, "Many rabbinic scriptures to this day do not use Arabic numerals but instead use Hebrew letters to stand for the various verse and chapter numbers."[34]

Speaking of the pre-exile use of symbols for numerals, John J. Davis says, "But it appears that all peoples in the fertile crescent area employed at least two notation systems, the symbols and the fully written words…According to GA Reisner and others, ostraca from Samaria show more than 20 occurrences of what has been judged to be 15, consisting of a sign for 10 looking like a Greek lambda, and a sign for 5 like and early gimel, having a n upright line with a horizontal stroke to the left. Similar signs were used in the Tell ed-Duweir A letters before the fall of Judah to the Babylonians."[35]

Thus, if one believes that the "480" of 1 Kings 6:1 was a memory device, it more likely stood for 16 generations with an average of 30 years each. As to the reason for choosing 30 years to a generation, note that David became a father in his 30th year (1 Chron. 3:1-4; 2 Sam.5:4,5). More especially, the generations listed between Moses and David may be the reason for choosing "480."

1 Chron. 6:33-37 lists 16 generations listed between Moses' generation and David's generation, Korah to Heman, and this only fits well with a long period for the judges, and so a c.600-year period Exodus to the temple. Also notice obvious gaps in many genealogies. Compare the 21 generations of Levi's son Kohath to David in verses 33-43 with only 11 generations between Judah's son Pharez and David in Ruth 4: 12, 18-22 and I Chron. 2:1-15. It has been said that these 11 generations appear to be a father to son chronology, but these 11 generations would add up to only about 330 years from Israel entering Egypt to King David, and no one attempts to fit the entire time in Egypt, the Conquest and settlement, and the times of the judges within a mere 330 years! Also compare Ezra 7:1-5 and I Chron. 6:3-15.

Later, in Luke's genealogy, (Luke 3:23-38) he lists 22 generations of Mary from the king Jechonias' generation to Christ's birth (Neri in Luke 3 being in the same generation as Jechonias on Joseph's side in Matt. 1:11,12;2 Kings 24:8-14). Jeconiah (also called Jehoiachin) was carried away in Nebuchadnezzar's eight year 598 BC (born 616 BC); thus, we have an average generation for that period (616-2BC) of 28 years (614/22=27.9). These later generations from Babylon to Christ have the appearance of being complete.

One could hypothesize, therefore, that at an early time, they thought of an average generation as about 30 years, and a copyist added this statement to 1 Kings 6:1. Crisswell says that the normal length of a generation then was 30 years; the Greeks said 1/3 Century).[37]
So, the possible Hebrew calculation of 480, could have been a calculation based on 16-30 year generations for the period from Egypt to the temple.

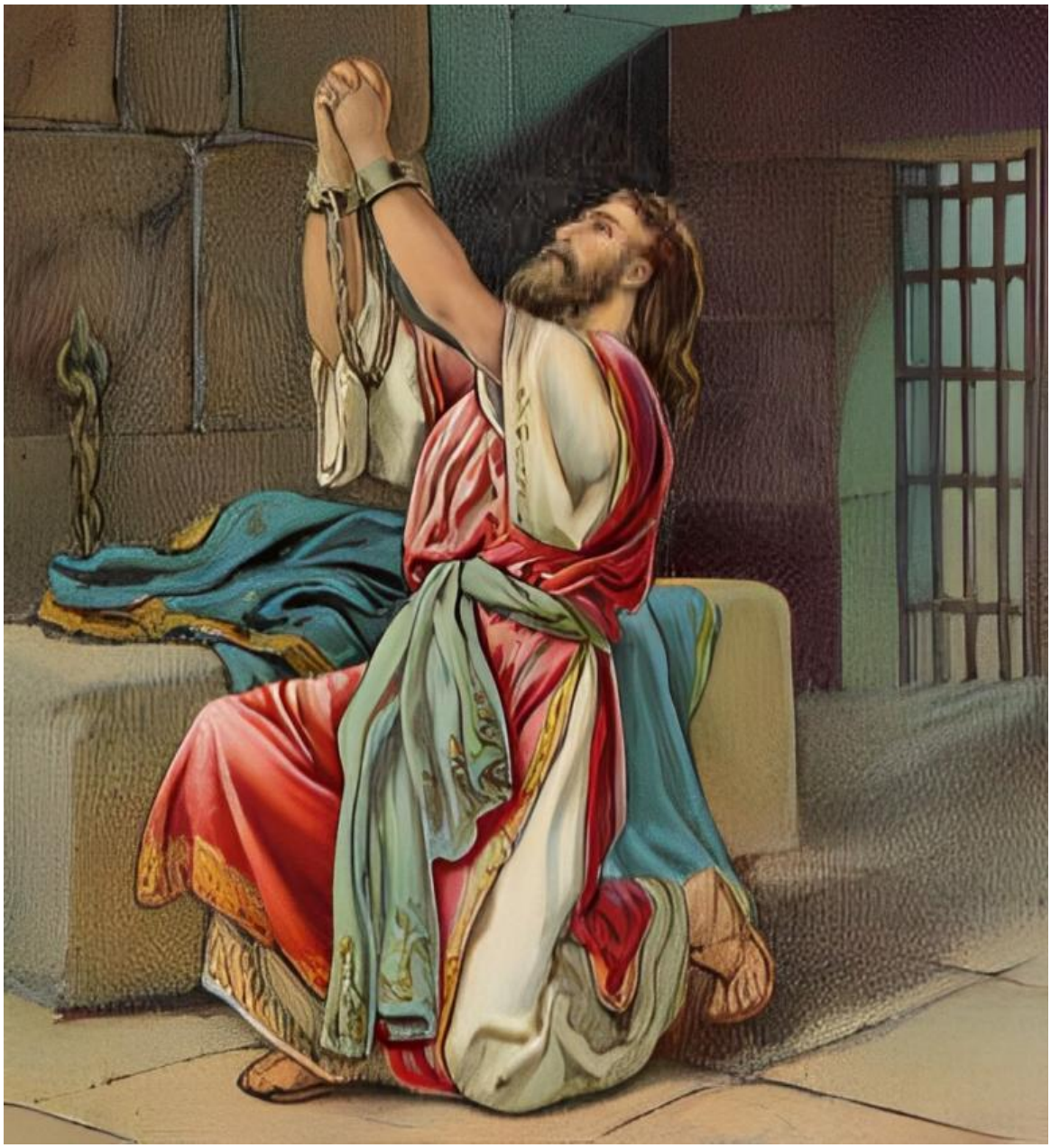
It has been countered that if the number 480 represented so many generations, the scribe would have more likely written the number 484, adding 4 years to the 16 generations, as it was in the 4th year of the next reign that the temple was begun. but this is not likely at all.
But then why did the LXX copiers also use a similar number,440, instead of 444, when they wanted to "correct" 1 Kings 6:1 (they often tried to correct what they considered chronological errors, and even their various MSS differ from each other in this regard). And Josephus, writing in 93 AD, seems to know nothing of either of these numbers. I would propose that if the 480 in 1 Kings 6:1 is not original, that the same reasons for choosing 480 lie behind choosing 440.

Barnes states: "There is reason to believe that what is mentioned here was the common chronology of his time. It accords remarkably with that which is used by Josephus. Thus, (*Antiq.*, book 7, chapter 3, section 1), Josephus says expressly that Solomon "began to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign, 592 years after the exodus out of Egypt," etc.

This would allow 40 years for their being in the wilderness, 17 years for Joshua, 40 for Samuel and Saul, 40 for the reign of David, and 452 years for the time of the judges and the times of anarchy that intervened. This remarkable coincidence shows that this was the chronology which was then used, and which Paul had in view…. On the whole, it seems, therefore, **probable that the words "in the four hundred and eightieth year, etc.," are an interpolation into the sacred text, which did not prevail generally before the third century of our era."**[38] **Josephus** later states, that from Phonecian records concerning Hiram's reign (who helped build the temple) he had, he calculated the time period to be 612 years.[38a]

Whether Josephus was correct in every detail is not the issue. If this was the first century Jewish chronology, how could the 480-year clause have been in their copy of 1 Kings? They would not have dared change it. It could be argued that this was added to the Hebrew MSS at the time they added the clause to the LXX, or when it became popular. The oldest copy (300AD) of the LXX, Sinaiticus, has it, but with the number 440.

If we had a first century copy or older, this would probably solve the problem. As we have first century copies of much of the OT in the Dead Sea Scrolls, this was hoped to be a way to confirm the reading here, even as it has confirmed the reading of Ex.12:40, but our Hebrew MSS only go back as far as 900AD and the DSS MS is missing 1 Kings 6.



Manaseh prays

The other extreme, proposing that I Kings 6:1 is a copy error involving 1000 missing years (read 1480), goes against all scriptural references for this period, yet has been proposed by one group in an attempt to match certain Egyptian archaeological datings with the biblical accounts. They quote the NEB reading of Acts 13:16-21 in support of this, which sandwiches the 450 years between the wilderness and the judges![39]

What about Jubilee counting?

Wikipedia states, "the observance of the Jubilee year only applied when the Jewish people were living in the Land of Israel according to their tribes. Therefore, in one sense Jubilee has not been applicable since the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel in 722 BCE."

The bible never counts by Jubilees; nevertheless, some have used proposed Jubilees (of 49 years) to construct bible chronologies. Wikipedia adds, " The Talmud (Yoshe's Seder Olam) states that the people of Israel counted 17 Jubilees from the time they entered the Land of Canaan until their exile at the destruction of the First Temple.[49] If counting is measured back 17 cycles from Ezekiel's Jubilee (Ezekiel 40:1)[50] that began in Tishri of 574 BC, based on Thiele's computation,[51] the first year of the first cycle would have been 1406 BC. ..but 1406 BC is the year of entry into the land that is traditionally derived by another method, namely taking Thiele's date of 931/930 BC for the start of the divided kingdom after Solomon's death, in conjunction with 1 Kings 6:1 (Solomon's fourth year was 480th year of Exodus-era), to derive the date of the Exodus in 1446 BC. The method of determining the date of the Exodus and entry into Canaan from the Jubilee cycles is independent(?) of the method of deriving these dates from 1 Kings 6:1, yet the two methods agree."(or made to agree). A different approach is taken in the Talmud (*Arakhin* 12a–b) which, like *Seder Olam*, assigns only 410 years to the First Temple,[53] preceded by 480 years from the exodus to its building by Solomon (1 Kings 6:1) in 832 BC (by the rabbinic accounting) and its destruction in 422 BC"[40]

The oldest record we have of 1 Kings 6 with 480 years is found in this talmud. It could be argued that the "480" year clause in 1 Kings 6:1 was put there by Yoshe at this time. 67 years earlier Josephus does not seem to have it in his copy of Antiquites of the Jews (8.3.1;20.10.1), nor his later book, "Against Apion 2.2." Then this amazing coincidence becomes understandable. As indeed, Rabbi Yoshe played fast and loose with historical dates, especially when he tried to cover up the fulfillment of Daniel's prophesy in 33AD, changing the date of Messiah's death to coincide with the Jewish "savior" in his time, Simon bar Kokba. The wholesale diminishing of Persian history was no less his target to accomplish this. Yoshe, to the orthodox Jews, is like the Pope to loyal Catholics. He could write whatever chronology he wanted, and knew he didn't have to be bothered by historical or biblical evidence. Thorpe says, "But the Talmudic references you mention (e.g. Arakhin 12b) are not indepedent witnesses. They are statements made with Seder Olam in mind. There is really only one literary source for a 17th jubilee in the time of Ezekiel. Other Talmudic references are simply allusions to or commentaries of that main source, which is Seder Olam. Also, the Seder Olam reference to a jubilee in the time of Ezekiel was not a historically remembered event. It is a midrashic exegesis of Ezekiel 40.1 by Rabbi Yose combined with calculation. If the alledged announcement was something remembered from history Rabbi Yose would have cited the name of an earlier authority in the stream of received tradition."[41]

"It seems a not unfair conclusion that such dates are the work of an interpolator, trying to bring the history within the chronological system: a conclusion somewhat confirmed by the alterations and omissions of these dates in the LXX."[42]

As to the time of writing the original book of kings, Encyclopedia Britannica states: "Finally, 1 Kings 8:29-31, 8:33, 8:35, 8:38, 8:42, 8:44, 8:48, 9:3, 11:36 imply that the Temple is still standing.

There was, accordingly, a pre-exilic Book of Kings. The work in this earlier form must have been composed between 621 and 586 B.C. Clarke states, "In this chapter we find *Zif* and *Bul* and in **1 Kings 8:2**, we find another, *Ethanim*; and these are supposed to be borrowed from the Chaldeans; and consequently this book was written after the Babylonish captivity. Before this time we find only the word *Abib* mentioned as the name of a month, **Exodus 13:4…**

These books (1,2 Kings) were written during or after the Babylonish captivity, as at the end of the second book that event is particularly described. **."**[43]

As the glamour of Josiah's reforms deeply impressed the original compiler, perhaps he wrote before 600. To this original work 2 Kings 24:10-25:30 was added in the Exile, and perhaps 23:31-24:9 or other sections. In addition to the supplement which the exilic editor appended, a comparison of the Massoretic text with the Septuagint shows that the Hebrew version of the text was retouched by another hand after sources of the Septuagint were complete."[44]

Divided Kingdoms

Solomon reigns 40 years,[1] (2 Chron.9:30); then the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah comprise the next period. There was much war during this period, not only between Israel and Judah, but also by Syria, then Assyria, and finally Chaldea, eventually causing most of the survivors from both Israel and Judah to go into captivity. Beginning with the last years of Pekah's reign (c.732 BC), Assyria captures many in both Israel and Judah and deports them to Assyria.

In 722/721 BC, the Assyrian king Sargon (following Shalmaneser: 2 Kings 17) conquered Israel; and in his annals, he boasted of taking away 27,290 people from the Northern Kingdom of Israel and bringing in foreigners to replace them (2K 17:24); the people living there being the despised Samaritans in Jesus' day). Then, in the 14 year of Hezekiah (c.701 BC), Assyria takes many defensed cities in Judah (2K 18:13), and Jerusalem is about to be taken over by a massive Assyrian army, but is miraculously spared (in response to Hezekiah's prayer, 2 Kings 19:20) until 597 and 586 BC when most of Judah (except the poor) is carried away to Babylon (2 Kings 24:14-25:12; 2 Chron. 36:20). Some also voluntarily left Judah for Egypt after Gedaliah, the appointed governor, was assassinated in 581 BC (2 Kings 25:25).

The numbers for the total period of the kingdom of Judah until Jerusalem's fall in 586 BC, have been added up in various ways, from 345 to 394 years in length. The problems are with the times prior to 722 BC, when Israel (the 10 tribes) was still a kingdom. Admittedly, the period of the divided kingdoms is most difficult to reconcile with all the scriptural data; proposing co-regencies, viceroys when the father was still king but the son began reigning also, interregnums when there possibly was no king, assuming accession or non-accession dating for each kingdom at various times, etc.

For example, Haley states concerning interregna, “The rabbis say that because Hoshea was tributary to the Assyrians in the early part of his reign, the first nine years are not to be reckoned; his reign properly beginning with his independence. Mr. Brown admits an interregnum or a period of anarchy lasting 8 years.”[2]

Jordan says, “In the history of Israel two interregna seem to be required by the text, one between Jeroboam II and his son and successor Zechariah (cp. 2 Kings 14:23;15:1,8), and the other between Pekah and Hoshea (2 Kings 15:27-33; 16:1,2; 17:1). …The only way to avoid these interregna is to assume some very long co-regencies, which the bible does not support. The notion that there were times of civil strife after kings were murdered is more satisfactory.”[3]

Kiel comments on 2 Kings17:1: “In the 12th year of Ahaz began Hoshea to reign. As Hoshea conspired against Pekah, according to ch.15:30, in the 4th year of Ahaz, and after murdering him made himself king, whereas according to the verse before us it was not till the 12th year of Ahaz that he really became king, his possession must have been contested for 8 years.”[4] Thus there is an 8 year gap , possibly a time of anarchy between Pekah’s death and Hoshea’s official years of reign. As to the other gap, Kiel argues, “As Jeroboam died in the 27th year of Uzziah, according to our remarks on ch. 14:29, there is an interregnum of 11 years between his death and the ascent of the throne by his son, as almost all the chronologists since Usher have assumed.”[5]

The problems are that some of the details seem contradictory, and neither Judah matches with Israel or either kingdom's chronologies synchronize with Assyrian records before 722 BC. Hezekiah, Shalmaneser V, (Ululai), and Hoshea synchronize in 722 BC in 2Kings 18:9.

Many try to synchronize Egyptian history here also. [5a] Most chronologers tie biblical history with secular history based on equating Egyptian king Shoshenq with the king Shishak, who invaded Judah in Rehoboam's reign in 2 Chron.12.

This was because an inscription from Karnak was read this way by a famous Egyptologist, Jean Champollion, who read a cartouche 'Yudah ha malek' (Judah). Later Egyptologists proved the true reading is 'Yad ha malek' (Aruna), which is a city 100km north of Jerusalem. It names many other places in the relief, so we can trace his campaign. It skirted around Judah, attacking cities in the Northern kingdom. Therefore some say he was not the king in 2 Chron.12, and there is no synchronism here between Egypt and Judah. But if not him, who? Some speculate that he had another campaign where he did attack Judah and Jerusalem; but then would he not have advertised that campaign?

BAR questions, "So did Shishak also conquer Jerusalem? Despite both 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles mentioning that Shishak took away the Temple treasures, neither account states that Shishak succeeded in conquering the city. This is particularly interesting as Jerusalem is not one of the cities that Shishak claims to have conquered in his Karnak inscription. As Yigal Lavin suggests in "Did Pharaoh Sheshonq Attack Jerusalem?,BAR, July/August 2012, it is possible that Jerusalem is not listed precisely because it was not actually conquered by Shishak. Instead, before the city fell, King Rehoboam saved the city by paying tribute to the Egyptian pharaoh. Thus, the treasures reportedly taken by Shishak were not spoils of war but rather a bribe. This likewise explains the words spoken by the prophet Shemaiah in 2 Chronicles 12:8: "Nevertheless they [Jerusalem] shall be his [Shishak's] servants, so that they may know the difference between serving me and serving the kingdoms of other lands."[5b]

Pharaoh Sheshonq's conquest in this area (Beth Shean) has been dated at 920BC, according to the newest method: archaeomagnetism.[5c] However, he reigned 943-922 BC. There was a reported ShoshenqII who reigned for 2 years after Shoshenq1. Wikipedia says,"the German Egyptologist Jürgen von Beckerath in his 1997 book *Chronologie des Pharaonischen Ägypten* maintains that Shoshenq II was rather an independent king of Tanis who ruled the 22nd Dynasty in his own right for about two years.

Von Beckerath's hypothesis is supported by Shoshenq II's employment of a complete royal titulary along with a distinct prenomen Heqakheperre and his intact tomb at Tanis was filled with numerous treasures including jeweled pectorals and bracelets, an impressive falcon-headed silver coffin and a gold face mask—items which indicate a genuine king of the 22nd Dynasty."[5d] Either way however, any Sheshonq connection with the Jerusalem attack will not work with the long kings chronology.

As Thiele states, "So we find that, whereas the chronologies of Assyria and of the Old Testament coincide at a period late in the 8th century BC; about the middle of the 8th century there seems to be a discrepancy of 16 years or more, and if we go back another century, the discrepancy increases to almost 50 years."[6] Scholars like Thiele hold to a shorter chronology and attempt to synchronize the reigns of Israel and Judah's kings with the contemporary chronology of Assyria; especially with the Assyrian eponym list. (see Appendix). Pierce says, "He did this by constructing viceroy relationships to collapse the length of a king's reign by overlapping it with the king's predecessor…The longer chronology consistently measures time from when a king became viceroy. This procedure is in accord with the oldest Talmudic understanding of how this was done."[7]

For example, Theile has Uzziah having a viceroy reign with his father Amaziah for 24 years before becoming the lone king in the 27th year of Jeroaboam. The problem is, Uzziah was 16 years old when he began to reign, which was in the 27th year of Jeroboam; so how could he be reigning even before he was born? Thiele manages this by saying that the number 27 in 2 Kings 15:2 is a copy error and should read, "3rd year." However, the only numerical copy errors demonstrable are single digit ones.

As Allis stated, "It is remarkable that such an amount of co-reigning should be required to bring the biblical chronology of the period into accord with the Assyrian…while the biblical writers recognized the presence of several co-reigns, they differed from the modern writers by ignoring these co-reigns in determining the actual reign of a king. Thus, they give Amaziah 29 years and Uzziah 52 years of actual reign as against the modern theory which makes the one reign about 5 years and the other 27."[8]

On the other hand, those who hold to a long chronology, who try to synchronize Israel's reigns with Judah's reigns traditionally propose two long interregna when no one was counted as king in Israel and discard most secular synchronisms. Thiele argues, "Nothing in the bible, nothing in contemporary history, calls for any interregna anywhere during the period of the Hebrew kings…" [9] However Ptolemy's kings' list has 2 interregna, 704-703 and 688-681, which occurred during the time of Judah's kings.

So seemingly, either one holds to the short chronology of Israel and surmises co-reigns for Judah, or one holds to the long chronology of Judah and proposes Israel had some long periods of interregna when no king was on the throne. The short chronologies are added up to put Solomon's death between 929-931BC, and a medium position has him at 940BC.[9a] It is interesting that Josephus, long before anyone proposed the shorter chronology, favored today by scholars, also *should* come to a similar date according to his sources.[10] That he did not is for other reasons.

Jones posits that if we add up the reigns of the kings of Judah for the known historical times (namely 721BC and 586 BC) and they add up to this interval (135 years), then we know that there are no unmentioned co-reigns or anomalies in this period. And if no *unmentioned* co-reigns in this period, then no unmentioned co-reigns in the entire Judahite Kingdom period; thus, we can use the data from Judah alone to determine the entire period.

From Hezekiah's 6th year, which was the year the Northern Kingdom of Israel fell in 721 BC to Zedekiah's 11th year when Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 BC, there were 8 kings whose reigns he reckons thus: Zedekiah 11yrs, Jehoiachin 3mo., Jehoiakim 11 yrs., Jehoahaz 3 mo., Josiah 31 yrs., Amon 2 yrs, Manasseh 55 yrs.,Hezekiah 24 yrs (29-6 inclusive of his 6th yr=24).

"The total of 134 years, 6 months and 10 days carries us into the 135th year of that time frame." The only co-reign he makes in Judah is 4 years, Jehoshaphat/Jehoram. 2K 8:16 states, "And in the 5th year of Joram, the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoshaphat *being* then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign."

"This verse requires that Jehoram was placed upon the throne while his father was still alive and reigning. From 2 K 3:1; 8:16; 8:25; and 9:29, the length of this overlapping co-regency was unequivocally determined to be 4 years." Jones adds, "Some would also claim a co-regency (hence an overlap) for Uzziah and his son Jotham (2 Chron 26:21)…This verse unmistakably states that Jotham did not begin to reign until his father died, hence he did not bear the title of king when Uzziah became a leper."[11] 2 Chron. 26:21,23 states, "And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, for he was cut off from the house of the Lord, and Jotham his son was over the king's house judging the people of the land…So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of burial which belongs to the kings, for they said, 'he is a leper;' and Jotham his son reigned in his stead." From 2 kings 15:5,30,33, we see this time was 4 years (20 total -16 after father's death).

Jones also deducts one year from his total count because he says, "Customarily the kings of Judah used accession dating while those of Israel most often used the non-accession method. Judah adopted the non-ascession method when Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram, married Athaliah, whose parents were Ahab, the wicked king of Israel, and Jezebel, the depraved Sidonian princess. When Athaliah's influence was broken, Judah returned to the accession method."[12] Jones places the total period, Jeroboam to Jerusalem's destruction at 389 ½ yrs, based primarily on Ezekiel's prophesy (Ezek.4) and one 4 year co-reign of Jehoram with Jehoshaphat (2K 3:1;8:16,25;9:29), but not the 4 year co-reign of Jotham and Uzziah(1 K.22:42; 2K 3:1;8:16,25; 9:29).

Israel Captivity	Judah to Babylon	Return of Exiles	Rebuild Temple	Esther	Nehemiah builds wall	Maccabean revolt
-----|--------|-|--|--------536-------515--------478-------444----------167 --------						
722	605	597	586			

Kings of Judah

(from Judah's kings chronology)

Rehoboam	17	1 K 14:21	Jotham	16	2 K 15:33
Abijah	3	1 K 15:2	Ahaz	16	2 K 16:2
Asa	41	1 K 15:10	Hezekiah	29	2 K 18:2
Jehoshaphat	25	1 K 22:42	Manasseh	55	2 K 21:1
Jehoram	8	2 K 8:17	Ammon	2	2 K 21:19
Ahaziah	1	2 K 8:26	Josiah	31	2 K 22:1
Athaliah	7	2 K 11:4	Jehoahaz	¼	2 K 23:3
Joash	40	2 K 12:1	Jehoiakim	11	2 K 23:36
Amaziah	29	2 K 14:2	Jehoiachin	¼	2 K 24:8
Azariah	52	2 K 15:2	Zedekiah	11	2 K 25:2

394 years

Further, some say the prophesy in Ezekiel 4 refers to this period and put the number at 390 years accordingly. However, the 390 years in Ezekiel 4 for the iniquity of the house of Israel is the only time applied; the 40 years for the iniquity of the house of Judah in verse 6 seems not to parallel it, with the possible exception of the first 40 years of Manasseh's reign, for which incredible amount of evil, Judah's judgement would fall; but then the 40 years would be included in the 390 years (see chapter on Ezekiel, p.130).

Ptolmey's King's List

Nabonassar	747-734	Mushezib-Marduk	691302-689	Cyrus	538-530
Nadius	733-722	…….	688-681	Cambyses	529-522
Ukinzer,Pulu	731-727	Assurakhiddin	680-688	Darius I	521-486
Ululai	726-722	Shashumukin	667-648	Xerxes	485-465
Marduk-appal-iddin	721-710	Kandalanu	647-626	Artaxerxes I	464-424
Sargon	709-705	Naboplassar	625-605	Darius II	423-405
……	704-703	Nebuchadnezzar	604-562	ArtaxerxesII	404-359
Belibni	702-700	Amel-Marduk	561-560	Ochus	358-338
Assurnadinshum	680-668	Nergalsharusur	559-556	Arses	337-336
Nergalushezib	693	Nabonidus	555-539	Darius III	335-332

Also, adding up the reigns of kings differs depending if they used the accession or non-accession method. In non-accession dating, a first year of a king is counted even if he only reigns one day that year, so when a successor becomes king, two kings are claimed as having reigned that same year. Accession dating would reckon actual years.

There is evidence that primarily, Israel used non-accession dating and Judah used accession dating. Concerning accession dating, one provable reign would be that of David. He reigns 7 years, 6 months in Hebron and 33 years in Jerusalem.
If this was non-accession dating, the scriptures would have recorded 41 years for his reign; 2 Sam. 5:4,5 however records that he reigned 40 years total, which indicates accession year dating (This also means the remaining months of his reign were counted with Solomon's reign). Therefore, not counting any co-reigns or interregna, the years would add up according to the reigns stated for the kings of Judah.

Exile

The House of Israel, the 10 tribes in the North, go into captivity first. "In the days of Pekah, king of Israel, came Tilgath-Pileser, king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galillee, and all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria." (2 K 15:29).

Then, "Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it, and at the end of 3 years, they took it, even in the 6th year of Hezekiah, and the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria." (2K 18:9-11).

Judah is attacked 8 years later: "Now in the 14th year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them" (2 K 18:13), but was turned back when the angel of the LORD killed his army in response to Hezekiah's prayer (2 K 19). In Judah, after Josiah's godly reign, the Lord brings ever-increasing judgment on Judah for Manasseh's sins (2 Kings 23:26).

Pharaoh Necho puts the land under heavy taxes for 8 years (23:33,36;24:1), then Nebuchadnezzar executes judgment on Jerusalem in 3 stages as spoken of by the prophets (24:2). The city was destroyed, the temple burned, and the ark is never heard of again.

The first time Nebuchadnezzar attacks, in the 3rd year of Jehoiakim, (606 BC), Jehoiakim becomes his servant, and Judah's enemies raid them from time to time (2K.24:1-3, Dan.1:1); then in Nebuchadnezzar's 8th year (597 BC), he besieges the city and carries 10,000 skilled craftsmen and warriors and all the treasures from the palace and temple away to Babylon. "And he carried away all Jerusalem" (24:12-16); the third time in his 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (586 BC), he burns the city, burns the temple, and demolishes the walls. "So Judah was carried out of their land." (2 Kings 25:8,9,21).

Nebuchadnezzar's first year was in 604 BC according to Ptolmey, 605 others, 605 herein; although historians tell us, and the years from 2 Kings 23:36, 24:12,18,25:8 & 2 Chron. 36:20-21 confirm, that he began ruling the kingdom a year before, 606 BC, or even 607 BC (20 months as viceroy according to Eusibius), while his father was still king. Jer.25:1 makes it clear that he captured Jerusalem in the first official year of his reign, which was in the 4th year of Jehoiakim (605 BC). Daniel 1:1 also confirms he besieged Jerusalem the year before this; "In the 3rd year of the reign of Jehoiakim."

Keil states, "The 8th year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar is reckoned from the time when his father had transferred to him the chief command over the army to make war upon Necho, according to which his first year coincides with the 4th of Jehoiakim (Jer 25:1).

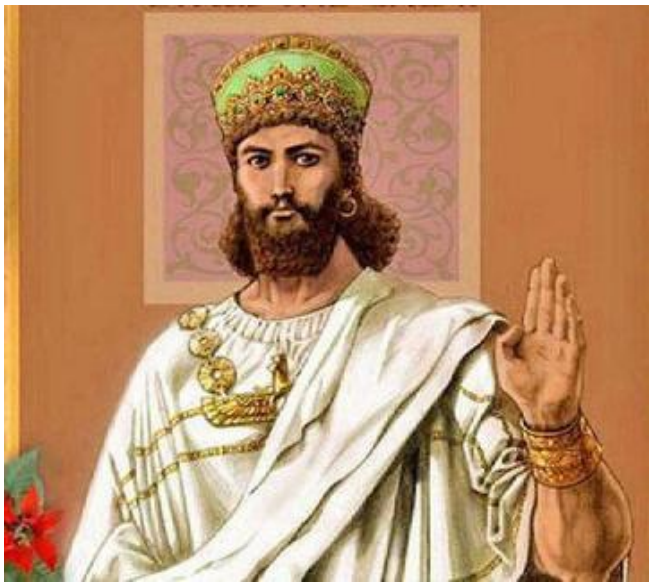
As Nebuchadnezzar acted as king, so far as the Jews were concerned, from that time forward, although he conducted the war by command of his father, this is always reckoned as the point of time at which his reign commenced, both in our books and also in Jeremiah (cf.ch 25:8, Jer 32:1)."[2] In his 19th year (586 BC), he carries Judah away for the final time to Babylon. That this 586/587 BC date is correct is also evidenced by the Assyrian tablet B.M.22047, which fixes the date for the Accession of Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar at 597 BC, 11 years before Judah was carried away into Babylon. (2 Kings 24:18; 2Chron.36:11).

The next significant date is the 1st return of the Jews to their land in the "1st year of Cyrus" (2 Chron.36:20-22). Cyrus's reign begins in 559 BC, and he and Darius the Mede (not to be confused with Darius I) conquer Babylon late in 539 BC. Darius actually reigned for almost 2 years in Babylon before Cyrus returned from warfare, so some commentators have the 1st year of his independent reign over Judah in 537 or 536 BC.

Jamieson says, "He had been king of Persia for many years before the issuing of his remarkable edict concerning the emancipation and restoration of the Jews; and therefore the words "in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia," must in accordance with Ezra 5:13 be interpreted as

meaning, not the beginning of his reign, but the first year of his acquisition of Babylon."[3] In fact, Ezra 5:13 calls him "Cyrus, the king of Babylon" instead of his usual title "Cyrus, king of Persia." Keil adds, "…hence the 70 years terminate in 536 BC, the first year of the sole rule of Cyrus over the Babylonian empire."[4]

The reference to this period of Servitude "to serve the king of Babylon 70 years" (Jer.25:11) "until the reign of the *kingdom* of Persia" in 2 Chron. 36:20 begins with the first conquest of Nebuchadnezzar, in the 3rd or 4th year of Jehoiakim in 606/605 BC,[5] when he carried Jehoiakim away to Babylon according to Jeremiah 25:1,11,12, and one would think, end with the Persian occupation in 539 BC (2 Chron. 36:5,20,22; Jer.25:11,12;29:10).



Cyrus

It will be noted that this period of time is only 68 years maximum (inclusive, because it was late in 539). However, Jamieson states that 2 Chron. 36:20 should be translated, "Until the king of the kingdoms of the Persians."[6] This would end their servitude 2 years later in 536/537 BC, and would include the 2 years under Darius the Mede because the king of Persia, Cyrus, was away. As Rawlinson states, "The context shows that it is the first year of Cyrus *at Babylon* which is intended."[7] This equals 70 years. This is also evidenced from scripture in the book of Daniel. Daniel 1:21 reads, "And Daniel continued unto the 1st year of king Cyrus."

In ch. 5:31, Darius the Mede takes the kingdom and in ch. 10:1, Daniel's last vision, is in the "3rd year of Cyrus, king of Persia." (chapters 11 & 12 are earlier, ch. 9:1). Therefore, the 3rd year of Cyrus was his first year in Babylon.

Another period of 70 years, stating that Jerusalem, the temple, and the cites of Judah will remain desolate, refers to the final destruction in 586 BC[8]and ends according to Zechariah 1:7,12;7:1-5 in the 4th year of Darius I in 517 BC (not to be confused with the short reign of Darius the Mede 20 years earlier).

The temple is finished in the 6th year of Darius I in 515 BC (Ezra 6:15), and Ezra returns to Jerusalem in the 7th year of Artaxerxes (457 BC, Ezra 7:9). Then Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem (2 Chron36:21) in the 20th year of Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:1-9), and the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem. "You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem." (v.17).

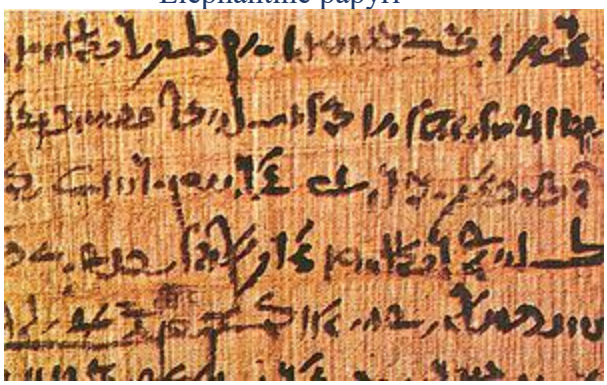
Maccabean Coins

There is the opinion that Ezra returns to Jerusalem the next year after the temple is finished; that the 7th year of Artaxerxes spoken of in Ezra 7:7 is really the 7th year of Darius I.[9] This is supposed because the account in Ezra goes from chapter 6 in the 6th year of Darius Hystaspes to chapter 7 in the 7th year of Artaxerxes. If this be Longimanus, there is an unexplained gap of about 58 years. This is an unnatural way to read this; and if we back up to Ezra ch.4, the natural flow of Ezra 4 presupposes that both the Ahaseurus and the Artaxerxes spoken of here to have reigned before Darius Hystaspes. Ezra 4 ends with: "Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes letter was read before Rehum and Shimshai, the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews and made them to cease by force and power. Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the 2nd year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia."

It must be remembered that these are titles, not their personal names. Also, there were many kings called by the same "names". Thus we have Darius the Mede, Darius I,II,III, Ahasuerus, the father of Darius the Mede (Dan. 9:1), Ahasuerus, the husband of Esther, and an Ahaseurus between Cyrus and Darius (Ezra 4:5;23;24), (which would correlate with the reign of Cambysis) . We have others named Artaxerxes too. Thus Smith has the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4:7 to be Smerdis who reigned for 8 months after Cambysis in 522 BC, while retaining the traditional view that the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah 2:1 is Artaxerxes Longimanus (464-424 BC).[10]

It cannot be overemphasized that every Persian ruler was called Mighty King, which is Arta-xerxes in Greek and Aha-seurus in Persian. The LXX translators, who lived just after the Persian rulers, translated the "Ahaseurus" in the book of Esther as "Artaxerxes."

Elephantine papyri



It has also been suggested that:

1. The name, Nehemiah, in the lists of the first return of the Jews in 536 BC (Ezra 2:2, Neh. 7:7) being the same Nehemiah who governs the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall beginning in the 20th year of Artaxerxes. They further contend that all the Persian kings' first names were actually titles; thus, this Artaxerxes could be Darius I, Xerxes, or Artaxerxes Longimanus

2. The lists of priests in Neh. 10 who covenanted with Nehemiah in the 20th year of Artaxerxes match about 50% with the list in Neh. 12 of those who returned with Zerubbabel in 536 BC. In the book of Ezra, in the first list of returning exiles under Zerrubbabel, there is no Ezra listed.

There is a Nehemiah, but he is not further mentioned. We know of another Nehemiah in Nehemiah's time, (Neh.3:6), so many believe this is also a different Nehemiah. Neh. 12:1 has a priest named Ezra returning with Zerubbabel, but the only Ezra in the book of Ezra comes up to Jerusalem later, in the 7th year of Artaxerxes.

However confusing the various lists are, we know from the account throughout the book of Ezra that Ezra, the priest/scribe, returned during the second return in the 7th year of Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:7-9 in 457 BC), and from the account in the book of Nehemiah that Nehemiah, the governor, returned in the 20th year of Artaxerxes (Neh. 5:14).

Cooper says, "Sir Robert Anderson calculated the beginning of the 69 weeks from the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus, which Anderson understood was given on or about 445 BC…However, since Anderson's time, most scholars believe that Artaxerxes Longimanus' decree was issued on March 5, 444 BC.[11] That this Artaxerxes is Longimanus is confirmed by the Elephantine Papyri, which indicate that Nehemiah was replaced as governor of Judah by 410 BC. Following are two proposed solutions:

1. There is the circumstance of the sameness of names in these lists of the first returning exiles enumerated in Neh. 7&12, and those living at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah in Artaxerxes' reign.

Ezra 7:1 states: "Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, the son of Amariah, the son of **Azariah**, the son of Meraioth, the son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest: This Ezra went up from Babylon;…"

Neh.7:7 adds: “Who came with Zerubbabel: Jeshua, Nehemiah, **Azariah**, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah.”

So we see that Ezra was a grandson of Azariah who came over with Zerubbabel in 536 BC. Though Neh.12:1 says, ‘Now these *are* the priests and the Levites that went up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,” **this Seraiah and Ezra obviously are different people; for Azariah, Ezra’s grandfather, came over with Zerubbabel.** My own father and cousin had the same name as I do, so I have no problem with the same names used in succeeding generations.

Kiel states: “Ezra is called Ben Seraiah, whose pedigree is traced to Eleazar the son of Aaron; Seraiah the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, was the father of Josedec the high priest carried into captivity (1Ch_6:14, etc.), and was himself the high priest whom Nebuchadnezzar slew at Riblah (2Ki_25:18-21). Between the execution of Seraiah in the year 588 and the return of Ezra from Babylon in 458 b.c., there is a period of 130 years. Hence Ezra could have been neither the son nor grandson of Seraiah, but only his great or great-great-grandson. When we consider that Joshua, or Jeshua (Ezr_2:2), the high priest who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel, was the grandson of Seraiah, we cannot but regard Ezra, who returned thence 78 years later, as a great-great-grandson of Seraiah…Hence the names of Ezra's ancestors from Seraiah up to Aaron (Ezr_7:1-5) agree also with the genealogy of the high-priestly race (1Ch_6:4-14), with the *one* deviation that **in Ezr_7:3, between Azariah and Meraioth, six members are passed over, as is frequently the case in the longer genealogies, for the sake of shortening the list of names.**”[12]

2. There is a 92-year span between these events in the current consensus chronology, 536-444BC. Thus, it is proposed that the list of those who covenanted with Nehemiah in Neh. 10 must be family names, not names of individuals. However, it has been countered that if family names are meant, then the lists should be identical, and they are not.

cylinder seal of Xerxes

The identification of the kings in Ezra 4 and 6 is a point of controversy that must be addressed. In Ezra 4:5-7,23,24; the reigns seem to follow each other, and seem to end with the reign of Darius I and the cessation of building the temple in Darius’ 2nd year (519 BC). This results in having Ahaseurus and Artaxerxes before Darius I.

Rawlinson, who posited no insertion in Ezra 4, said that there was a friendly Artaxerxes and an unfriendly one (Ezra 4:7-22); one of the successors of Darius I, and one who reigned between Cyrus and Darius I (Thus the identification of the kings in Ezra 4 would be: Cyrus, Cambyses (Ahaseurus), Psuedo-Smerdis (Artaxerxes), Darius I).[13] But Kiel states that "it is a priori improbable that Ps.Smerdis, who reigned but about 7 months, should in this short period have pronounced such a decision concerning the matter of building the temple of Jerusalem." (Cambyses is ruled out as being the Ahaseurus in Esther because he only reigned 9 years, whereas this Ahaseurus reigned some time above 12 years).[14]

Most scholars therefore believe verses 6-23, which only speak of building the walls, refer to a later time, and that verse 24 should be read directly after verse 5, which speaks of working on the Temple: "And hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia even until the reign of Darius, king of Persia…then ceased the work of the house of God…unto the 2nd year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia."

This view holds that the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4:7-23, 6:14 is Longimanus. This requires taking the section 4:6-23 to relate not to the building of the temple, but rather to the building of the walls of Jerusalem; these intervening verses between vs. 5 and 24 forming an episode, as Kiel states, "for the sake of presenting at one glance a view of all their machinations against the Jews...the contents of verse 24 are but a recapitulation of verse 5…With this recapitulation of the contents of verse 5, the narrative, verse 24, returns to the point which it had reached at verse 5.

What lies between is thereby characterized as an illustrative episode, the relation of which to that which precedes and follows it, is to be perceived and determined solely by its contents…Verse 24, so far then, as its matter is concerned, belongs to the following chapter, to which it forms an introduction."[15]

Brown adds, "There is also a clear change in the object of opposition, from the temple in verses. 1-5 to the walls of Jerusalem in verses 7-23. Rather than expressing a connection to verse 23, (the Hebrew) signals the author's return to his primary narrative. This understanding is further confirmed by Ezra's use of resumptive repetition to reconnect the narrative plot line; the last phrase of verse 5 parallels precisely the last phrase of verse 24."[16]

The other problem is Ezra 6:14: "And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet, and Iddo. And they builded and finished *it* according to the commandment of the God of Israel and according to the commandment of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes, king of Persia. And this house was finished…in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king."

Obviously, Artaxerxes Longimanus did not reign until long after the completion of the temple, but as Ezra was writing in his reign, some have posited that he included Longimanus here because of his decree to provide for the temple (7:15-23), though this was much later.

Those who hold that the Artaxerxes in Ezra 6 was Darius I, say the connective "and" can be rendered "even" so as to read, "Cyrus and Darius, even Artaxerxes the king."

Although “and” (Heb.”waw”) can be rendered “even,” this is not the usual rendering. As Jones says, “Why not insist upon “even Darius” in the same verse, as the “waw” is also present there.”[17]

The main chronological question is “Who is the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah 2, who, in his 20th year as king, gave Nehemiah permission to rebuild Jerusalem.” Because he reigns over 32 years (Neh. 5:14), there are two possibilities. He is either Longimanus who reigned 464-424 BC or he is Darius 1 who reigned 521-486 BC.

115Nehemiah was contemporary with the high priest, Eliashib, who was grandson of Joshua, the same Joshua who returned with Zereubbabel in 536 BC (Neh. 3:1). Nehemiah came to Jerusalem in the 20th year of Artaxerxes, which would be 444 BC for Longimanus or 501 BC for the 20th year of Darius I (Hystaspis).

Which fits better? Kiel says, “For Eliashib, whom Nehemiah found high priest at his arrival at Jerusalem (3:1), being the grandson of Joshua who returned from Babylon in the year 536 with Zerubbabel would be anything but a young man. Indeed, he must them have been about 75 years old. Moreover, it appears from 12:4,7, that in 433 when Nehemiah returned to Artaxerxes, he was still in office, though on Nehemiah’s return, he was no longer alive, and that he died soon after 433 BC at the age of about 90.”[18]

Also, the prophesy of Daniel 9 discussed earlier figures out perfectly to the decree given in the 20th year of Artaxerxes Longimanus. Being Nehemiah and Ezra are connected (both of them served under Artaxerxes), the key to the problem has said to lie in the likelihood of the gap between Ezra 6&7.

So who was the Ahseurus in the book of Esther. One key in identifying this Ahaseurus is the number of provinces he held. Esther 1:1 says that this Ahaseurus reigned over 127 provinces. He made a feast inviting the "princes of the provinces" and the "7 princes of Persia and Media which saw the king's face and which sat the first in the kingdom" (1:14).

Earlier in Dan. 6:1, Cyrus, the Persian conqueror of Babylon, installs Darius the Mede(538BC) for 2 years, and Darius sets over the kingdom 120 princes, and over these 3 presidents. According to Herodotus, to these hundred and twenty provinces seven more were afterwards added, through the victories of Cyrus and Cambyses, and Darius Hystaspes.

1 Esdras 3:1 states that Darius the Great had 127 provinces and was Esther's husband. Josephus, though paraphrasing 1 Esdras, has Longimanus as Esther's husband with 127 provinces, without mentioning how many Xerxes held (Ant.11.3.2;11.6.1).Secular history says Xerxes lost provinces in his defeats.

Jacob states, "The king of the story did not lose any of his 127 provinces during the whole period of his reign; but Xerxes did lose a considerable part of Asia Minor in the 6th and 7th years of his reign... Most of the Greek territories became independent after the battles of Salamis, Platea, and Mycale...he lost the Greek cities and islands of Asia minor, the whole of Thrace, and the greater part of Cyprus between the years 479-476 BC and never recovered them." [19]

The apocryphal book, "Rest of Esther," also puts the time of Esther under Artaxerxes Longimanus, son of Xerxes,[20] but Xerxes is favored by most. This is because, first, a sequential reading of scripture puts Ahaseurus between Darius 1 and Artaxerxes Longimanus.

> Ezra 4:5,6 states, "And hired counselors against them to frustrated their purpose, all the days of Cyrus, King of Persia, even until the reign of Darius, King of Persia, and in the reign of Ahaseurus…and in the days of Artaxerxes." Historically, we know that there was no other king between Darius and Artaxerxes except Xerxes, and Ahaseurus reigns over 12 years (Esther 3: 7); therefore, *this* Ahaseurus between Darius and Artaxerxes is Xerxes.
>
> The seventy translators of the Septuagint would have been in a position, writing just after that period of history, to know who Esther's king was. Throughout the book of Esther they name him, "Artaxerxes the Great", referring only to Artaxerxes Longimanus. Though scholars in the past have also identified this Artaxerxes with Longimanus, some recently have questioned that they were referring to Longimanus; but it is well known that he was the first to use this title as a throne name.

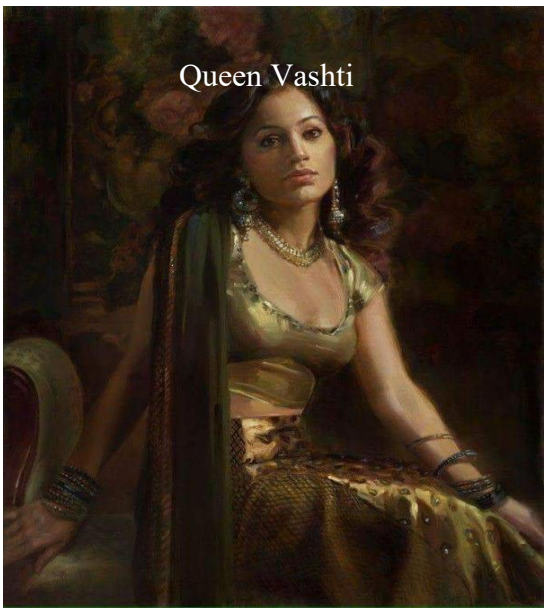
Moreover, saying this refers to Darius 1, does not flow with the account. Darius was familiar with the Jews,and wrote to them, at least since his second year of rule (Ezra 4:24-6:15).

The account in Esther shows that Esther's husband was not familiar with them, much less conversant with them until his 12th year (Esther 3:7-8.) Also, **we know the edict of Darius, in his second year, to rebuild the temple, but, there is nothing about building the Jewish temple in Esther.**

Ezr 7:1-7says, "Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra…went up from Babylon…in the 7th year of the king." Most scholars make this Artaxerxes in Ezra 7 to be longimanus, and see a long break here in the history between ch. 6 and ch.7; Ezra first appearing here and not being mentioned in the previous chapters concerning Darius. Also, Darius only had 6 counselors we know of. This Artaxerxes has seven.

> Some try to add Artabanus, the captain of the bodyguard or Vizier of Xerxes, to the list of Persian kings, because during the first 7 months of Artaxerxes' reign, he was the ruling power, having assassinated Xerxes (Subsequently, Artaxerxes killed him). However, he should not be reckoned as king, anymore than Belshimmani, who proclaimed himself king for 2 months in 484 BC or Shamash-Eriba who proclaimed himself king for a few months in 482-481 BC. [21]

Secondly, Persian inscriptions have been found supposedly identifying Xerxes as Ahaseuus. Jones states, "Grotefend deciphered the inscriptions of Persian characters found among the ruins of the ancient Persian city, Persepolis. The name of the son of Darius Hystaspis was deciphered as "KHSHAYARSHA" which is the old Persian. Grotefend translated this into Greek as "Xerxes".


Queen Vashti

When 'KHSHAYARSHA" is transposed into Hebrew, it becomes almost letter for letter "AKHASHVEROSH", which is rendered "Ahaseurus" in English. (however)… Ahaseurus means "the mighty" (aha) and "king" (seurus).

How then in translating does this suddenly reduce to "Xerxes" which means only "shah" or "king"? Actually, it would seem that "Artaxerxes" would have been a more faithful rendering. The translators of the Septuagint so concurred (Esther 1:1, etc. LXX). Moreover, Thucydides (571-396BC) tells us that Darius Hystaspis used his Phoenician fleet to subdue all the nations in the Agean Sea, and Didorus Siculus relates that they were all lost again by his son Xerxes immediately after his 479 BC defeat to the Greeks -before the 12th year of his reign.

Yet it was after the 12th year of the reign of Ahaseurus of Esther that he imposed a tribute upon the isles. (Est.3:7-13;9:1,21;10:1) or at least during the very last days of that 12th year. Further, as Ussher pointed out, the terms of the 387 BC "Peace of Antalcids" recorded by Xenophon, shows that, except for Clazomene and Cyprus, Xerxes' successors held none of these islands."[22]

Thirdly, Daniel 11:2 says that the 4th king after Darius the Mede would be far richer than the previous kings. The historical records say that Xerxes was the 4th king after Darius the Mede: Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius Hystapses, Xerxes. [23] (some put Smerdis after Cambyses, but he only reigned 7 months and was an imposter, and some would not count Cyrus and Darius the Mede as two since they reigned concurrently) So there are ways to make the 4th king Darius I, Xerxes, or Longimanus.

"In the first year of Darius the Mede…Behold, there shall stand up yet 3 kings in Persia; and the 4th shall be far richer than they all; and by his strength through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia." - Dan. 11:1,2.

Note, in his 3rd year, the grandeur attributed to Ahasuerus: "This is Ahasuerus which reigned from India even unto Ethiopia, over 127 provinces…When he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom…in the kings palace where were white, green, and blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple, to silver rings and pillars of marble; the beds were gold and silver upon a pavement of red and blue and white and black marble. And they gave them drink in vessels of gold…" Esther 1:1,4,6.

Darius I was the king who rebuilt the city of Shushan (Suza) and built the renowned king's palace, so it's been said he may not have had this palace so decked out by his third year. The DNF inscription from this palace, which has been excavated from a hill to the North of modern Shush states…"This palace which I built at Suza, from afar it's ornamentation was brought…the gold was brought from Lydia…the precious stone Lapis lazuli and carnelian…turquoise…the silver and ebony were brought from Egypt. The ornamentation with which the wall was adorned was brought from Yauna…"[24]

What about the next Persian king, Xerxes? [25]According to Herodotus, Xerxes, in his day, was called the richest man in the world, (Her. 7.27) who, having gathered an enormous army from Asia and Europe, fought against the realm of Grecia, (Her. 7.184-6,8.113) but was repulsed by them in 480 BC. [26] (Darius also lost a battle with Greece in 490 BC).

Fuller states, “The satrapies of Darius Hystaspis reached 29 in number, and the nations under Xerxes were about 60. The 127 "provinces" include probably sub-satrapies and other smaller divisions of the great governments.” [27]

Xerxes loss at Salamis

Wikipedia states, “After the military blunders in Greece, Xerxes returned to Persia and oversaw the completion of the many construction projects left unfinished by his father at Susa and Persepolis. He oversaw the building of the Gate of All Nations and the Hall of a Hundred Columns at Persepolis, which are the largest and most imposing structures of the palace. He oversaw the completion of the Apadana, the Tachara (Palace of Darius) and the Treasury, all started by Darius, as well as having his own palace built which was twice the size of his father's.

His taste in architecture was similar to that of Darius, though on an even more gigantic scale.[59] He had colorful enameled brick laid on the exterior face of the Apadana.[60] He also maintained the Royal Road built by his father and completed the Susa Gate and built a palace in Susa.[28] This took many years, so his palace was not decked out by his third year as Esther’s king was. But Artaxerxes 1 fits perfectly here.

The Septuagint properly translates the "Ahaseurus" in the book of Esther as "Artaxerxes"; and Xerxes was called "Xerxes the Great,[29]" which is what Artaxerxes (Ahaseurus) means. It must be remembered however that Xerxes' father Darius, was also called "the great king." Remember, Artaxerxes is a title, not a proper name. **Longimanus alone was known by this title by itself.**

Wikipedia states: "However, the Septuagint, the Vulgate, the Midrash of *Esther Rabbah, I, 3* and the Josippon identify the king as Artaxerxes, and the historian Josephus relates that this was the name by which he was known to the Greeks.[6] The Ethiopic text calls him *Art'eksis*, usually the Ethiopic equivalent of *Artaxerxes*." [30]

What clues are there in the book of Esther? Esther starts the book in the 3rd year of Ahaseurus' reign (Est.1:3) when he throws a huge 6-month party and deposes his queen, Vashti. The next thing recorded is the search for a new queen with Esther becoming queen in the 10th month of his 7th year. (Est.2:16).

And in the 12th year the Jews stand for their lives against their enemies in Persia. (Est.3:7) and Mordecai becomes 2nd to the king til the end of his reign (Est.10:3) (presumably).

If Xerxes, he had only 8 years to go; if Darius, Mordecai would have been #2 for 24 years. Also, Xerxes personally was present at the battle of Salamis in September 29th of his 7th year. There is no time for Esther to be chosen queen or have those long feasts (Est.1:3-5;2:18), let alone the inclination. The Persians also fought a major battle in his 8th year at Plataea, and suffered huge losses both times. His queen wife (and cousin) Amestris, daughter of Otanes, had his brother's entire family killed, and Xerxes was assassinated in the end (Herodotus 9.109).

The question is how does profane history fit with the Bible's account. From the Persian records, Atusa was Darius Hystaspes Queen wife, Amestris was Xerxes queen wife, and Damaspia was Longimanus' queen wife; so, both Vashti and Esther remain unattested outside of scripture.

Concerning Damaspia, Struse states: "This name is the only name we have for a "queen" of Longimanus, and it comes from a questionable source, Ctesias. He has been criticized for 'mixing historical fact with fictitious elements', and that his account of the Assyrian kings does not reconcile with the cuneiform evidence. [31]

The Encyclopedia Iranica states: “She was named only once by Ctesias (in Jacoby, *Fragmente*, vol. III.C, p. 468, frags. 15, 47); according to the excerpts from his text (where Xérxēs is to be corrected to Artoxérxēs, as in two neighboring instances), she died on the same day as Artaxerxes,

thence in 424/3 b.c.e.; yet there is no available evidence whatsoever on her age and lineage.[32] She is the only unattested queen in Persian history.

Artaxerxes did marry a Babylonian princess, Andia, and had many concubines such as Alogyne of Babylon and Cosmartidene. Darius 1's known wives were Atossa, daughter of Cyrus, her sister Artystone, Pamys, daughter of Smerdis, and an unnamed daughter of Gobrius. Xerxes only wife we know of was Amestris, daughter of Otanes, a Persian general.[33]

There is however a seeming problem with equating Ahaseurus with Artaxerxes Longimanus. This would make (this Mordecai in Esther) very old, if this Mordecai was one of the first returning exiles to Jerusalem in 536 BC with Zerubbabel -Ezra 2:2. However, the Mordecai in Esther is living in Persia, not Jerusalem. If the genealogy is complete, and the Mordecai in Ezra is the same as the one in Esther, he was the 3rd generation after Jeconiah's captivity in 597BC, which would limit his era; and the story ends in Ahaseurus' 12th year, which would be 453 BC if Ahaseurus were Longimanus, 474 BC if Xerxes, or 509 BC if Darius I. (Ezra 1:1,2:1,2; 3:7).

Ezra 2:1,2 says, "Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon and came again to Jerusalem …which came with Zerubbabel were Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seriah, Reeliah, Mordecai…"

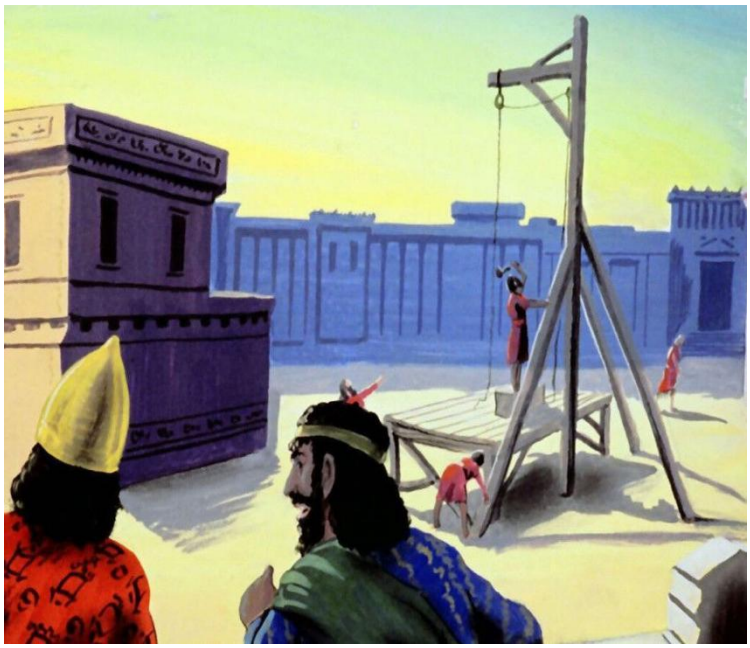
Esther 2:5,6 says, "Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite, who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah, king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away."

The NKJV of Esther 2:5,6 is clearer, "Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite. Kish had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been captured with Jeconiah, king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon,had carried away."

What about the problem of the sameness of names in scripture? What about Nehemiah? Now, obviously, this Nehemiah in Nehemiah 1, who began to rebuild the walls in Artaxerxes's 20th year, in 444 BC is a different Nehemiah than the one recorded in Ezra 2:2 as coming over with Zerubbabel in 536 BC. So too, some think that the Mordecai in Ezra 2:2 is a different one than the Mordecai of the book of Esther. If the genealogy is complete (big if), he was the great-grandson of Kish, who was carried away in 597 BC, who became a foster father for Esther, a grown young woman in her prime (c.18-20), in the 3rd year of Ahaseurus' reign. This would eliminate any king later than Artaxerxes 1. Remember that the account of Esther and Mordecai is in Persia, not in Judea where a Mordecai returned with Zerubbabel.

In this connection of the sameness of names here, note that the Bigvai in Ezra 2: 2 must be a different Bigvai than the one recorded in vs. 14, whose descendants "the *children* of Bigvai" at that time were 2056. Note that later, in the 7th year of Artaxerxes, two of the "*sons* of Bigvai" (Ezra 8:1,14) went up with Ezra from Babylon. Kiel comments, "Ezra is called Ben Seraiah, whose pedigree is traced to Eleazar the son of Aaron; Seraiah the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, was the father of Josedec the high priest carried into captivity (1Ch_6:14, etc.), and was himself the high priest whom Nebuchadnezzar slew at Riblah (2Ki_25:18-21).

Between the execution of Seraiah in the year 588 and the return of Ezra from Babylon in 458 BC, there is a period of 130 years. Hence Ezra could have been neither the son nor grandson of Seraiah, but only his great or great-great-grandson. When we consider that Joshua, or Jeshua (Ezr_2:2), the high priest who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel, was the grandson of Seraiah, we cannot but regard Ezra, who returned thence 78 years later, as a great-great-grandson of Seraiah…



Haman's gallows Est.7

Hence the names of Ezra's ancestors from Seraiah up to Aaron (Ezr_7:1-5) agree also with the genealogy of the high-priestly race (1Ch_6:4-14), with the *one* deviation that in Ezr_7:3, between Azariah and Meraioth, six members are passed over, as is frequently the case in the longer genealogies, for the sake of shortening the list of names."[34]

So which king is more likely? It must be noted the cryptic statement in Neh. 2:6 when king Longimanus was speaking with Nehemiah, "And the king said to me (the queen also sitting by him.)" Many think this was Esther, either his wife or his mother. (Usually the term "Queen" would mean his wife; especially sitting by him). Why would God inspire Nehemiah to add this unusual detail to the text?

Persian

Darius the Great's conquests put more countries under Persian rule than any other period in history, favoring him with the 127 provinces of Esther 1:1; his son Xerxes only retaining them for his first 7 years. However, Darius, by decree, could never marry outside of royalty. And I think we know how binding these decrees were (Daniel 6:15).

Heorodotus, who wrote soon after the events (440 BC), states: "They(Darius and nobles) decreed that any one of the 7 should, if he so wished, enter the king's palace unannounced, save if the king were sleeping with a woman, and it should be forbidden of the king to take a wife saving from the households of the conspirators… Darius took wives from the noblest houses of Persia, marrying Cryrus' daughters Artossa and Artystone." [35]

So why would the author of Esther say "Now in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces" as if to distinguish him from all others?

The writer of Esther is writing years after Xerxes lost provinces, which he never recovered. Est 10:1 states, "And the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land, and *upon* the isles of the sea". Adam Clarke says, "Probably the isles of the Aegean sea, which were conquered by Darius Hystaspes. Is not it likely he would have been the one to lay the tribute?" However, Darius subjugated these isles by the 10th year of his reign in 513BC, and the tribute of Ahaseurus was not over newly subjugated isles, but over his whole realm and laid after Ahaseurus' 12th year (Esther 10:1).[36]

What about the other Artaxerxes (Mnemon, 404-358BC)? Hoschander writes: "The aim for which Darius 1 and his successor Xerxes, had striven in vain, the subjection of the Greeks, was actually attained by Artaxerxes 2. Greece was subdued and officially recognized Persian's suzerainty…At the outset of his reign, he was fortunate in recovering many Greek cities of Asia minor lost about 80 years before his reign by his great-grandfather Xerxes… But we know that Xerxes did not increase his empire; on the contrary, he lost the Greek cities and islands of Asia Minor, the whole of Thrace, and the greater part of Cyprus between the years 479-476 B.C.E., and never recovered them…"[37]

Encyclopedia Britannica states: "Although some scholars have marked the reign of **Xerxes I** (486-465 BCE) as the beginning of the decline of the Achaemenid Empire – noting his depletion of the treasury in his 480 BCE invasion of Greece and his poor performance afterwards – this claim ignores the effective reign of his successor **Artaxerxes I** (465-424 BCE). "[38]

What about Artaxerxes II who reigned 404-358 BC? Wikipedia states: "The Peace of Antalcidas (387BC) …gave up to the Persian king (Mnemon) all the Greek cities of Asia minor, and the islands which are reckoned among its dependencies to be held as tributaries…The passage 'and the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute on the land and the isles of the sea' undoubtedly refers to the Greek part of Asia Minor and the islands that became tributary to this king by virtue of the peace of Antalcidas."

Horshander states; "The peace of Antalcidas 387 bc was entirely of his own making. Sparta, at the advice of Antalcidas, gave up to the Persian king 'all the Greek cities of Asia minor and the islands which are reckoned as tributaries' as stipulated by this Peace.

It is noteworthy that both Plutarch and the author of the book of Esther in describing the signal success of Artaxerxes 2, use exactly the same expression.

The passage, "And king Ahaseurus laid a tribute on the land and the isles of the sea', undoubtedly refers to the Greek part of Asia minor and the islands which became tributary to this king, by virtue of the peace of Antalcidas. It was concluded five years after the events narrated in our story. Our author does not say that Ahaseurus came into the possession of these territories by means of conquest."[39]

Artaxerxes II

"Plutarch in his *Lives* (AD 75) records alternative names Oarses and Arsicas for Artaxerxes II Mnemon given by Deinon (c. 360-340 BC) and Ctesias (Artaxerxes 2 physician) respectively. These derive from the Persian name Khshayarsha, as do Ahaseurus (Arta-xerxes) and the hypocoristicon Arshu for Artaxerxes ii found on a contemporary inscription (LBAT 162).

These sources thus arguably identify Ahasuerus as Artaxerxes II in light of the names used in the Hebrew and Greek sources and accords with the contextual information from Pseudo-Hecataeus,Hecateusand Berossus ,as well as agreeing with Al-Tabari and Masudi's placement of events.The 13th c. Syriac historian Bar-Hebraeus, in his Chronography, also identifies Ahaseurus as Artaxerxes 2, citing the 6th c.AD historian John of Ephesus."[40]

As for his first wife, Ctesias testimony (he was court physician to Artaxerxes 2), states that Artxerxes 2 married his wife, **Stateria** before becoming king. She was then poisoned in his fifth year of reign (400BC) by his mother. There were 2 other Staterias following who reigned briefly. Concerning the etymology of the name, Kiel states: "That is Esther, the queen known by the name of Esther. The name אֶסְתֵּר is the Old-Persian *stara* with א prosthetic, and corresponds with the Greek ἀστήρ, star, in modern Persian *sitareh*." [41]

Therefore, the only seeming possibility is that the Esther in scripture is probably the first royal Star (Sitareh or Stateria), (though unattested historically probably because of her Jewish heritage); wife to Longimanus.

Christ's Birth

In the years preceding Christ's birth, there was a general expectation that the Messiah would be born soon. Rev. F.N. Piloubet comments, "The Magi" says Ellicott, "express the feeling which the Roman historians Tacitus and Suetonius tell us 60 or 70 years later had been for a long time very widely diffused.

Everywhere throughout the East, men were looking for the advent of a great king who was to arise from among the Jews. It had fermented in the minds of men, heathen as well as Jews, and would have led them to welcome Jesus as the Christ had He come in accordance with their expectation.

Virgil, who lived a little before this (70-19 BC), owns that a child from heaven was looked for who should restore the golden age and take away sin. This expectation arose largely from the dispersion of the Jews among all nations, carrying with them the hope and the promise of a Divine redeemer. Is. 9:11, Dan. 7.

Smith adds: "This expectation arose largely from the dispersion of the Jews among all nations…Daniel himself was a prince and chief among this very class of wise men. His prophesies were made known to them, and the calculations by which he pointed to the very time when Christ should be born became, through the book of Daniel, a part of their ancient literature."[1] (e.g: Dan.9:26 has 69 weeks of years between the command from Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem to Messiah being cutting off in the midst of his days, so 33Ad. Average generation then 70 years, midst = 35 years, so birth= c.3BC.) They would have been looking for a sign in the heavens probably for a decade prior to this.

It is perhaps surprising then, that they apparently knew Balaam's prophesy in Num.24:17 "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall arise out of Israel…", but were unaware of Micah's statement of the Messiah to be born in Bethlehem.(Micah 5:2;Mt.2:2).

Actually, Daniel's prophesy in Dan. 9 concerned the date of Christ's death, not his birth, but by knowing the year of his death, and that he was cut off in the midst of His years[2], they would have ascertained the "generation" in which He would be born, and would naturally have been in expectation for a few decades leading to the time He was born.

Barnes states, The word used here (גָּזַר *gâzar*), means properly "to cut, to cut in two, to divide." It is applied to the act of cutting down trees with an axe (see 2Ki_6:4). Here the natural and obvious idea is, that he would be violently taken away, as if he was cut down in the midst of his days.

Concerning the year of our Lord, there are those who attempt to bolster their argument for a certain year based on the "star of Bethlehem." Matt. 2:9 says, "…the star which they saw in the East went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was." Many have thought that this "star" was a conjunction of planets. The famous Astronomer, Kepler, believed the star to be a conjunction of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars in 7 BC. Others have posited a conjunction of Jupiter and Regulus in 3 BC, or of Jupiter and Venus in June 17, 2 BC.

Recently a theory has gained popularity that Jupiter was the "star." From Babylon, in September, 3 BC, Jupiter appears to zigzag past Regulus 3 times (in the constellation Leo), Jupiter supposedly crowning Regulus. Jupiter and Regulus are king "stars," Venus is the mother "star," and Leo is symbolic of Judah. Nine months later, Jupiter and Venus come together in a bright conjunction in June of 2 BC.

Simeon anticipating the birth of the Messiah -Luke 2:25

Observing these signs, they head toward Jerusalem and arrive there in November and find out from the scribes that Bethlehem is the city where the King of the Jews would be born in. Jupiter then reappears (perhaps it was obscured by clouds or was under the horizon) and leads them south, 6 miles to Bethlehem (where Jupiter stopped moving just as they reached the house where the Christ child was. Perhaps it did not have to move South to lead them, as they were already headed on the short hike to Bethlehem (South), and merely stopped moving when they reached the house where Christ was born.

Matthew said that the star "went before them," but it has been proposed that this need not mean the star moved from North to South. Weymouth's translation of Matt.2:9 is "The star they had seen when it rose led them on until it reached and stood over the place where the babe was." As to the star stopping, Jupiter does remain stationary among the stars for 6 days every 13 months due to retrograde motion.

It has been proposed that though no one believes that Christ was actually born on Dec. 25th, the wise men may have visited Him on this date, as it was that on Dec. 25, 2 BC, Jupiter stopped moving in the sky over Bethlehem just then (some of the planets do come to an apparent stop among the stars at certain times).

Earnest Martin says, “On that day, the “king planet” stopped its lateral motion for about 6 days…this may be a major reason why people in the early church said that Dec. 25th was a day associated with the Magi presenting their gifts to the newbornSavior.”[3]

Although it is only a 6-week trip by camel from Persia (Iran) to Jerusalem, there also is the theory that this happened closer to 2 years after Christ’s birth. Herod, in his wrath, had all the male babies killed 2 years and younger. Given Herod’s record of brutality, it is more likely that Jesus indeed was just months old, Herod making sure he got Him by overkill.

(Surely his soldiers did not ask how old the children were, but just approximated. Proponents of Jesus being 1-2 years of age site the different words used by Matthew and Luke. Luke’s account of Christ’s birth uses the word, ‘brephos’ (infant) while Matthew’s account of the wise men’s visit uses the word ‘paidon’ (child).

However, Jones points out that the word, ‘paidon’ is also used in scripture of infants and brephos is also used of a young child: “John the Baptist is said to be a ‘paidion’ when he is but 8 days old (Luke 1:59, 66, 76), as is Jesus Christ at the time of his birth (Lk 2:17) and when he was 40 days old (Lk.2:27; also see John 16:21;Heb.11:23). Indeed, ‘brephos’ is used of a young child (2 Tim.3:15; Lk 18:15-17).[4]

DeYoung adds, "...the star went before the Magi and led them from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. This is a distance of about six miles in a direction from North to South. However, not only does every natural object in the sky move from east to west due to the earth’s rotation, but it is difficult to imagine how a natural light could lead the way to a particular house.”[5] Matt. 2:9 states, “and lo, the star which they saw in the East went before them until it came and stood over where the young child was.”

Hendriksen says, “The star pointed out the very house! As described in verse 9, therefore at this point the strange and wonderful luminary must have been hanging low.”[6] Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the star of Bethlehem was probably a supernatural event; possibly an angel, as indeed angels proclaimed his birth from the night sky to the shepherds (Luke 2:8-14), and are even called “stars” in scripture. (cf: Jud.5:20, Job 38:7) There is the possibility that it could be both; first a stellar event signifying to them the Messiah being born in Israel, then an angelic event. leading them to the exact location.

Matt. 2:1,2 says, " ...Behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem saying, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him."

It is interesting that seeing this star caused them to believe that a king was born in Israel. They probably were familiar with Daniel's prophesy of a coming "Messiah, the Prince"(Dan.9:25-6) from their Persian accounts of the legendary magi, Daniel, but they did not know of Micah's prophesy that he would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

They saw this "star" temporarily in the East, possibly in their western sky towards Jerusalem (or in a constellation that they associated with Israel). They went to Jerusalem and then had to enquire of the chief priests and scribes where Christ should be born. As soon as they left Jerusalem, the "star" appeared again and led them to the very dwelling where Christ was. "And lo, the star which they saw in the East went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was."(vs.9)

. Ken Ham says, "None of the above speculations fully explain how the star "went ahead of" the Magi or now it "stood over where the child was… all "natural" stars continually move due to the rotation of the earth. They appear to rise in the East and set in the West, or circle around the celestial poles.

However, the bible does not say that this star was a natural phenomenon.... The virgin birth itself was a supernatural event; it cannot be explained within the context of known natural laws. And it should not be surprising that the birth of the Son of God would be accomplished by a supernatural sign in the heavens."[7]

Still others favor the theory of a Supernova leading the wise men. Astronomer Donald Deyoung comments, "Since planets orbit the sun at different speeds and distances, they occasionally seem to approach each other closely. However, multiple planets do not look like a single light source, as described in scripture. Also, planetary alignments are rather frequent and therefore not that unusual... Finally, an exploding star or supernova has been proposed to explain the Christmas star. Some stars are unstable and explode with a bright blaze. However, historical records do not indicate a supernova at the time of the Lord's birth. All three explanations fall short of the nativity story as predicted in Num.24:17 and recorded in Matt. 2:1-12"[8]

Joseph and Mary Escape to Egypt

Dionysus Exiguus, in 525 AD, calculated the birth of Christ as occurring in the year of Rome 753, which was 1 BC in his new system.[9] Note that these years are counted inclusively.[9a] Rome was founded in 753 BC. Thus 753 BC= 1st year, 753rd year = -1, 754th year = 0; however, Dionysius did not use a 0 year, but made A.U.754 1 AD in our calendar. Josephus recorded that Herod died shortly after a lunar eclipse (Ant. 17.6.4), not long before a Passover (Ant.17.9.3), and Christ was born sometime before this.[10]

The year that Christ was born has always been somewhat of a question. The early church fathers predominantly believed that Christ was born in either 2 or 3 BC. The theory that Christ was born in 4 BC has gained prominence since then, largely because of a lunar eclipse, which Josephus says occurred shortly before Herod's death. Many have equated this with a partial eclipse that occurred in 4 BC. Martin says, "All the lunar eclipses that were observable in Palestine during the general time for Christ's nativity can be accurately calculated." [11]

There were 2 total ones in 5 BC (March 23 and Sept.15th), one partial one on March 13, 4 BC, and 2 in 1 BC. However, because of the many problems that have come to light in recent years in dating Herod's death prior to 3 BC, both of the eclipses of Jan 9 and Dec.29th in 1 BC have been advocated. Ozanne states, "Lunar eclipses also occurred on 9th January and 29th December, 1 BC…" For example, the eclipse of 29th December has been ably defended by Adam Rutherford.[12]

He points out that the eclipse in 4 BC 'was a very small one (only about 4 digits, a digit =1/12th) and was visible from a few minutes before two o'clock till a few minutes after 4 o'clock in the morning and consequently would be noticed by very few people. (p. 418).

On the other hand, with that of 29 December, 1 BC, 'The moon was already in eclipse when it rose about the sunset at Jerusalem, and the eclipse continued for about two hours, so that even the children would be able to see it before being put to bed…Moreover, it was an eclipse of about 7 digits, that is to say, more than half the moon's disc was obscured.' (p.420).[13]"

Magi visit Herod

In conclusion, there were no eclipses visible there in 2 or 3 BC, only a third of the moon was covered in 4 BC, but there were 2 eclipses in 1 BC, and the eclipse of Jan. 9 was total; therefore, Herod could have died in 1 BC or 1 AD.[14] The only other year argued for is 5BC which had 2 near total eclipses, March 23 at 8:30 pm and Sept 15 at 10:30 pm.

First century Jewish tradition has 2 holidays commemorating the deaths of Kings Herod and Jannai. Filmer says, "Now 7 Kislev, which the Jewish commentator actually preferred to associate with Herod, fell earlier in the year than any of the above 3 lunar eclipses, and for this reason must be ruled out. But 2 Shebat, although it fell before the eclipse in 4 BC, occurred 15 days after each of the eclipses in 1 BC.

In view of the serious deterioration in Herod's health which Josephus says set in immediately after the eclipse, it does not seem likely that he could have lived much longer than the fortnight that this allows. If then, there is any truth in the Jewish tradition, it would rule out 4 BC, but support either of the 2 later years, early 1 BC or early 1 AD as the date of Herod's death. This would make Herod's death either Jan.24, 1 BC or Jan.13, 1 AD".[15]

There is also a Jewish tradition in Megillat Ta'anit that Herod died on 2nd Shebat (Rutherford says 1st Shebat). This, in fact, preceded the eclipse in 4 BC, but followed both eclipses in 1 BC by little more than a fortnight-this being the probable length of time that Herod continued to live after the eclipse. Again, Herod is said to have reigned 37 years "after he had been made king by the Romans" and 34 years after "he had caused Antigonus to be slain."

It is usual to reckon the longer period from Herod's appointment in Rome in 40 BC and the shorter period from his capture of Jerusalem in 37 BC. But Rutherford argues that Antigonus was not slain until about 34 BC.

Hence, the 34 years should be reckoned from 34 BC, and the 37 years from the beginning of his effectual reign in 38 BC. Further, Josephus tells us that Herod was about 70 when he died (Ant. 17,148; War 1,647). He also tells us that Herod was 25 when his father Antipater appointed him governor of Galilee, and that was in 47-46 (Ant. 14,158): "70-25=45, and 45 years after 47-46 is thus 2-1 BC." (p.428).[16]

Laney adds, "Mark Antony persuaded the Roman senate to appoint Herod "king of the Jews." Although it was an empty title at the time, because Antigonus was still in power in Jerusalem…during the next 2 years, Herod secured the territories appointed to him by Rome. Jerusalem fell to Herod's forces in the summer of 37 BC, Antigonus was executed, and Herod the Idumean became the undisputed King of Judea."[17.]

W. Filmer points out that although Josephus has Herod's appointment in 40 BC (Ant 14.14.5), this is contradicted by Apion "who mentions Herod's appointment in a context that can be dated from Dio's Roman History to 39 BC." (Apion, Civil Wars, v.75, ch.8). Filmer also shows that Josephus used the accession method of calculating, which puts Herod's actual first year of reigning at 38 BC, and Josephus said Herod reigned 37 years (Ant. 17.8.1). Herod's sons also co-reigned while Herod was yet alive (Wars, 32.2,3). Filmer argues for Herod's death a fortnight after the total eclipse of Jan. 9, 1 BC, on 2 Shebat. [18]

Also, there is the reference to Quirinius. Luke 2:1,2 states, "And there came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed, and this taxation was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria."

The only documented censuses we have from Augustus are in 28 BC and 8 BC, and there is the problem of Luke recording a census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Quirinius was not officially a governor until 6 AD.

M. Swihart comments, "2 BC was the glorious silver anniversary of Augustus…Roman officials from all over the empire would be going to Rome for the celebrations. This means that the governors would leave their provinces while lesser officials remained to conduct business…But it does seem probable that Quirinius may have been a provisional governor in 3\2 BC, while the actual prelate was away at Rome.

Indeed, Justin Martyr called Quirinius the "**procurator** of Syria" (Apology 1.34)." "…Quirinius' second census of Judea (is) mentioned in Acts 5:37. This is why Luke distinguished the registration at the time of Jesus' birth as being the "first" one, while he was (provisional) governor of Syria which Justin Martyr said was actually while he was procurator.

But who was the actual governor at this time? …Tertullian, living in the late second century who was by profession a lawyer and well acquainted with roman governmental affairs, said that the census that brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem was conducted when Sentius Saturnus was governor of Syria (Answer to the Jews, ch.8).

What's more, he said it occurred in the 41st year of Augustus, answering to 3/2 BC. Indeed, the early Christian sources were nearly united in stating that Jesus was born in 3\2 BC. The list included Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Eusebius, Epiphanius, Origin, Africanus, Hippolytus of Rome, Hippolytus of Thebes, and Cassiodorus Senator (Finnegan, Handbook of biblical chronology, p.229). This is strong testimony indeed because these sources were able to consult the vast libraries at their disposal which modern historians no longer have access."[19]

Also, in John 2:20, at the start of Jesus' ministry, the Jews said, "46 years was this temple in building…" Historians say the work on the temple began in 18 BC; therefore His ministry must have begun in 29 AD. (46-18+1=29, no zero year). Augustus' reign is stated as commencing in 27 BC, although Eusebius said that Christ's birth "was in the 42nd year of the reign of Augustus, and the 28th after the subjugation of Egypt and the death of Antony and Cleopatra." [20]

Hendrickson, commenting on Eusebius adds, "Eusebius here makes the reign of Augustus begin with the death of Julius Caesar (as Josephus does in 9,1 below)2 BC, which agrees with Clement of Alexandria's *Strom*.I (who gives the 28th year after the conquest of Egypt as the birth-year of Christ), with Epiphanius, *Haer*.LI.22, and Orosius, *Hist*.I.1. Eusebius gives the same date in his Chron.(ed.*Schoene*,II.p.144). Iranaeus, III.25, and Tertullian, *Adv.Fud*.8, on the other hand, give the 41st year of Augustus, 751 U.C.(3 BC)."[21]

John Mosley, in his book, The Christmas Star, comments, "Josephus tells us in his The Antiquities of the Jews that Herod died following a lunar eclipse but prior to the following Passover. The eclipse of 4 BC was followed by the Passover one lunar month later. It's not possible to compress all that happened (sic. in the last part of Herod's reign) in so short a time span….It is often said that Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem to pay their taxes and that, according to an inscription found on the ruined temple Augusteum in Turkey, this was the empire-wide tax of 8 BC.

In reality however, this particular tax was levied only on Roman citizens and wound not have applied to Joseph and Mary. In a regular taxation Mary would neither have had to accompany her husband nor have had to leave Nazareth. It is much more likely that this tax was actually an enrollment, or census and oath of allegiance to Augustus Caesar on the occasion of his silver jubilee when he was awarded the title Pater Patriae (father of the country) on Feb. 5, 2 BC. ("When the whole Jewish nation took an oath to be faithful to Caesar") and others, and it would have been required of all adults including non-citizens….

There is an additional a problem with the year 4 BC that has long puzzled historians. Imperial proclamations were awarded following wars. Within 2 months of Herod's death, the Jewish people had a revolt. There is however no Roman record of a Palestinian war between 4 and 1 BC. By his own account, Augustus was demobilizing his army during a period of peace that lasted from 7-2 BC…Augustus did not receive any imperial proclamations between 8 BC and 1 AD, although one was customarily awarded following a victory on foreign soil. If Herod died in the spring of 4 BC and the war was fought and won that summer and fall, an acclamation should have been awarded in 3 BC.

Martin shows that the rebellion against Archelaus was probably fought in 1 BC. Inscriptions found in Greece in 1960 show that a major war was fought in the Middle East (probably by Faius Caesar, grandson and heir of Augustus, and by Quintillius Varus, governor of Syria) in 1 BC. This was after the demobilization of the army had ended and just before Augustus' fifteenth imperial acclamation in 1 AD. This fits with a later date for Herod's death, but not for a death as early as 4 BC."[22]

In conclusion, using 4 BC and earlier for Christ's birth and the generally accepted dates for Herod's accession and death are shown to be unlikely from the references cited. Briefly, the main issues involve using the date of 40 BC for Herod's accession rather than the likely date of 39 BC (with his first full year of reign in 38 BC (Accession counting), and taking the 4 digit eclipse seen in 4BC to be the one Josephus refers to occurring the year Herod died, instead of either the 7 digit or total lunar eclipses seen in 1 BC.[23]

A 4 digit (33%) eclipse occurring at 2-4 AM, as it did in 4 BC, if noticed at all, would hardly be historically noteworthy. Therefore, a 2 BC date is a good candidate for Christ's birth which agrees with Luke 3:123: "Now in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar … Jesus himself began to be about 30 years of age."

The reign of Tiberius is a known historical date, the fall of 14 AD, and his 15th year has been stated to have been in 28-29 AD. Some have thought they had to read "about 30" very loosely because of Herod's supposed death in 4 BC, but as we have seen, this is not necessary. Luke, especially was a Greek trained historian, and "about 30" to him would mean that Jesus would be 30 sometime that year, not an unspecific round number that many have advocated.

Finegan comments, "Irenaeus follows this interpretation when he writes, "For when he came to be baptized, he had not yet completed his 30th year but was beginning to be about 30 years of age (Against Heresies 2.22.5).[24] Some have also challenged the year 14 AD, even though it is a firm date. (They do this by saying that Tiberius co-reign his first 2 years, but this would not be counted as his regnal years in Roman chronology. [25]

As to the exact day of his birth, we have no record. Some have said that Dec. 25 was chosen to match the winter solstice holiday, which was a popular holiday. Mosely states, "Christmas was not celebrated at all until the middle of the 4th c. …Although the winter solstice now occurs on Dec. 22, or sometimes the 21st, it used to occur on Dec.25th.

Minor changes in the calendar have shifted it. …Dec. 25th then is the date of the solstice in the old Julian calendar, and the solstice has been celebrated around the world for thousands of years."[26.] But the early church would not have kept Roman holidays. That didn't happen until after Constantine became emperor, when many pagan festivals and customs gradually became Christianized.

There is moreover an old Jewish tradition that states that a prophet is conceived and dies on the same day of the year. McGowen states, "yet, in the first few centuries C.E., the persecuted Christian minority was greatly concerned with distancing itself from the larger, public pagan religious observances, such as sacrifices, games and holidays. This was still true as late as the violent persecutions of the Christians conducted by the Roman emperor Diocletian between 303 and 312 C.E… Around 200 C.E. Tertullian of Carthage reported the calculation that the 14th of Nisan (the day of the crucifixion according to the Gospel of John) in the year Jesus died was equivalent to March 25 in the Roman (solar) calendar.
March 25 is, of course, nine months before December 25; it was later recognized as the Feast of the Annunciation—the commemoration of Jesus' conception. Thus, Jesus was believed to have been conceived and crucified on the same day of the year. Exactly nine months later, Jesus was born, on December 25."[27]

Scholars have pointed out that Christ's birth was not in winter, however. Jones states, "Shepherds would not normally be abiding with their flocks in the open fields at night in December (Tebeth), not only due to cold, but primarily because of the lack of pasturage at that season. It was the custom then as now to bring the flocks out of the field in the month Bul (Oct-Nov) and house them for winter…a competent Roman administrator would tend to take advantage of the annual agricultural festivals such as Unleavened Bread (which marked the beginning of the barley or grain harvest) or the Feast of Tabernacles (which was the celebration of the end or completion of the final in-gathering of the year's harvest) when all the males were commanded by God to go up to Jerusalem and thus already be engaged in travel."[28]

The time of the Jewish priests ministering in the temple at this time is another argument. Watson comments: "The Jewish priests were divided into 24 courses, each of which attended in rotation to perform the service of the temple...as each course, so each priest in the course was in attendance for one week, twice in the year, the great festivals excepted."[29]

Ed Hindson makes a good argument: "Most helpful in answering this question is a comparison of the birth of John the Baptist with that of Jesus. Luke ch.1 records that while Zacharias, a priest from the family of Abia, was ministering, an angel appeared and assured him that his barren wife was going to bear a son. Each course or family line of priests was assigned a specific month to minister. According to 1 Chron. 24:10, the course of Abia or Abijah was the 8th in order.

This means that Zacharias was ministering in the 9th week from the beginning of God's 1st month, which was Nisan (April). Transposing this to the Roman calendar would make it from about June 1 to June 8. It is likely that the wife of Zacharias conceived immediately when he went home.

Moving forward 9 months in the calendar from June would set the date for the birth of John the Baptist in the early spring, in the month of March. The bible says that Christ was 6 months younger than John (Luke 1:36). By adding 6 months to the time of John's birth, we come to the month of September, which is the approximate time when Christ was born. Further, the bible tells us that Christ's ministry ceased at Passover time (John 13:1), which was in the spring of the year. From available Bible information, we know His ministry began 3 ½ years prior to that spring. Working backward from this period, that would mean that His ministry began in the early autumn of the year. Luke 3:23 indicates that Christ began His ministry just as He was nearing 30 years of age. This was the proper age to begin priestly service according to Numbers 4:23."[30]

John and Herod

Herod's chronology also is tied to the year of Christ's birth. Herod's will divided his kingdom among his 3 surviving sons. Coins minted during their reigns show that each son seems to have dated his authority as extending back to 4 BC…Because Herod's sons seem to count their reigns as having begun in 4 BC, historians had concluded that the partial eclipse of March 13, 4 BC was the one associated with Herod's death. Martin shows that this is unlikely because too many reliably documented events took place between the eclipse and the following Passover to fit within so short a period as 30 days."[1]

As for the dating of the coins, it has been shown that coins were sometimes minted with dates not consistent with the reigns of the kings. It was not uncommon practice then to date coins with extra years of reign, both ante-dating and postdating. For example, Herod Agrippa I reigned over Judea from 38 to 44 AD (7 years), but he had coins minted stating both 8th and 9th years of his reign (WR Thompson, ZEPB, vol.1, p. 822)[2]. His successor too, Herod Agrippa II had coins minted with the same date on them, but three different Emperors (Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian)![3] They did not all reign at the same time.

Meshorer adds, "The coins dated year 3, were issued after the conquest of Jerusalem to replace the Hasmonaean currency. The date appears on no less than four coin types. Their issue began after the victory in July 37and continued after the end of his third '*de jure* year until his Jewish coronation on Nisan1, 36 BC…He dated no coins dated 'year 4' or further dated coins…

Dates of the birth of Christ in early Christian sources:

Irenaeus	180 AD	4/3 BC
The Alogi (per Epiphanius)	360 AD	9/4 BC
Cassiodorus Senator	550 AD	3 BC
Clement of Alexandria	194 AD	3/2 BC
Tertullian	198 AD	3/2 BC
Origen	220 AD	3/2 BC
Africanus	219 AD	3/2 BC
Hippolytus of Rome	210 AD	3/2 BC
Hippolytus of Thebes (1)		3/2 BC
Eusebius of Caesarea	325 AD	3/2 BC
Epiphanius	360 AD	2 BC
Hippolytys of Thebes (2)		2/1 BC
Anonymous Chronographer	354 AD	1 AD

For 3 years Herod waged against Antigonus until in 37 BC, he became the effective rule in Judea. Hence, what was theoretically his 3rd year became his first…minting of a large number of coins to replace those issued by Antigonus during the years when Herod was already theoretically ruler of Judea."[4]

Edwards Comments, "In the quotation given above, Kanael stresses that the dates found on coins register *de jure* years, as Meshorer makes equally clear, the issue of the coinage appears only after *de facto* rule has been established… There is no doubt that Antiquities dates the reigns of Herod's successors from Nissan 1, 4 BC. It should however be remembered that the Mishnah rule for Israelite kings would not apply to the sons who were neither Israelite nor kings.

Herod Phillip II ruled over the same largely non-Jewish territory, where Agrippa later became king and counted his own years according to the civil calendar. Agrippa's practice must previously been employed by Philip. It is possible to ignore such calendar niceties and to insist that the Herods dated their reigns from the Nissan New Year.

Numismatic requirements would then be met by treating Nissan 39/36 BC and Nissan AD 36 as Herod's and Agrippa's accession dates. Then, most of Josephus' dating would have to be deemed erroneous, and the 1 BC date for Herod becomes all the more unavoidable."[5]

Martin adds, "Perhaps the obscure statement of Josephus that Archelaus, only a few weeks after receiving his right to rule, was accused by his opponents as having "long exercised royal authority" (Wars 2.2.5) can make any sense. This certainly was not true in actual fact, but through the practice of antedating it could be accepted in a *de jure* manner."[6] In fact, Josephus has Archelaus reign 9 years in Wars 2.7.3 and 10 years in Antiquities 17.13.2 .

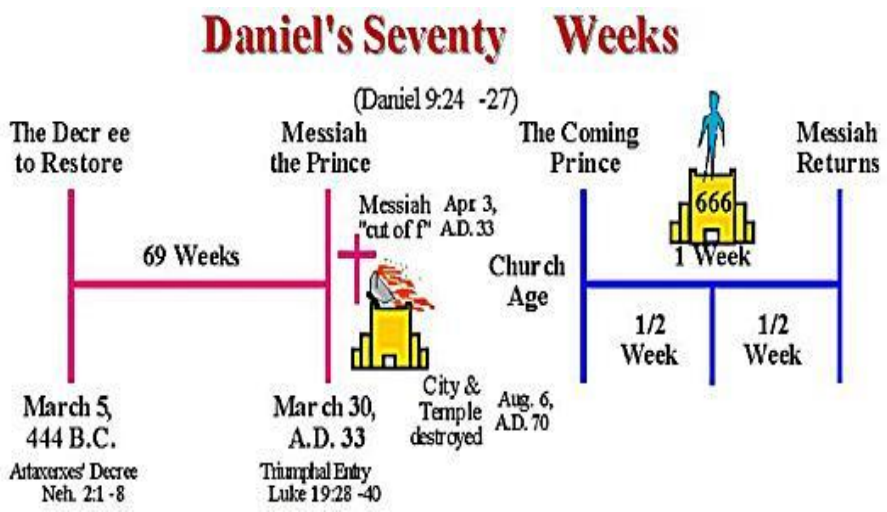
Daniel's 70 Weeks

Daniel 9:24-27 says, "70 weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophesy, and to anoint the Most Holy.

Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah, the Prince, shall be 7 weeks and 62 weeks: the street shall be built again and the wall, even in troublous times.And after 62 weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations, he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured out upon the desolate."

According to Young[1], the word for "weeks" (shabua) in Daniel 9, can also be rendered "sevens," as it is in Ezekiel 45:21. Therefore 69 sevens can mean 69x7 mornings, evenings, days, weeks, months, or years. The Messiah was not cut off 69 weeks later, but we know from history that the Messiah was cut off 69x7 years later. The command to restore and to build Jerusalem occurred only in the Decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus "in the month Nissan in the 20th year" of his reign, not in his 7th year as some believe; which decree did not concern the walls, gates, or city; only the temple.

After the 7 "weeks" of rebuilding (444-395 BC), the 62 "weeks" until the Messiah is cut off determines the year of His death. See Dan 9:26 : 'And after threescore and two weeks shall the Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.' The Septuagint renders it, 'For his life is taken away from the earth.' The word used here (גָּזַר *gâzar*), means properly "to cut, to cut in two, to divide." It is applied to the act of cutting down trees with an axe (see 2Ki 6:4)."



"Here the natural and obvious idea is, that he would be violently taken away, as if he was cut down in the midst of his days. The word is never used to denote a peaceful death, or a death in the ordinary course of events; and the idea which would be conveyed by it would be, that the person here spoken of would be cut off in a violent manner in the midst of his life." [2]

Artaxerxes' 20th year is a well-known historical date; 444 BC according to Ptolmey. To quote Sir Robert Anderson: "Julius Africanus, who in his *Chronography,*[3]describes the 20th year of Artaxerxes as the 115th year of the Persian Empire (reckoned from Cyrus, BC 559) and the 4th year of the 83rd Olympiad. This fixes BC 464 as the first year of that king, as it was in fact the year of his actual accession."[4] Thus, 559BC minus 115 years = 444BC; also 776 BC minus 83x4 years = 444 BC; which in turn by way of Daniel's prophesy of 69 weeks in Dan. 9:25,26 leads us to the date of the crucifixion of Christ.

Some have said Daniel's prophecy refers to Cyrus' decree in 536 BC or Darius Hystapis' decree in 519 BC or Artaxerxes' decree in 457 BC. However, these decrees concerned the temple and not the walls, gates, or city.

To illustrate the computation; 444 to 1 BC = 443 yrs, 1 BC to 1 AD = 1 yr, 32 years from 1 AD = 33 AD (443+1+32=476 yrs). Some hold to the 4 BC and 30 AD dates for Christ's birth and death so strongly that they are willing to disregard the implication of the prophesy of Daniel 9, which puts Christ's death in 32/33 AD, based on the 69 weeks of years from the command to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem given by Artaxerses in his 20th year of reign, which they rightfully date at 444 BC. Others, however, seeing this error, have sought to re-date Artaserxes' 20th year from 444 BC to 447 BC, which would have the 69 weeks end in 30 AD. However, no scholar of Oriental history will hold to 447 for Artaxerxes' 20th year ; the only meaningful controversy being whether his 20th year occurred in 444 BC or 445 BC; most holding to 444.

Hoerner comments, "The date of this decree is given in the biblical record. Neh.1:1 states that Nehemiah heard of Jerusalem's desolate conditions in the month of Chislev (Nov/Dec) in Artaxerxes 20th year. Then later in Artaxerxes' 20th year in the month of Nisan (March/April), Nehemiah reports that he was granted permission to restore the city and build its walls (2:1).

To have Nissan later than Chislev (in the same year) might seem strange until one realizes that Nehemiah was using a Tishri-to Tishri (Sept/Oct) dating method rather than the Persian Nisan to Nisan method. Nehemiah was following what was used by the kings of Judah earlier in their history. This method used by Nehemiah is confirmed by the Jews in Elephantine who also used this method during the same time period as Nehemiah…

Herod the Great coins

Since the accession year system was used, the 1st year of Artaxerxes' reign according to the Persian Nisan to Nisan reckoning would be Nissan 464-Nisan 463, and according to the Jewish Tishri to Tishri reckoning would be Tishri 464 to Tishri 463….Then the 20th year of Artaxerxes' reign…and the decree of Artaxerxes (2:1) occurred in Nisan (March/April) of 444 BC."[5]

Anderson adds, "The murder of Xerxes and the beginning of the usurper Artabanus' 7 months reign was in July BC 465; the ascension of Artaxerxes was in Feb. BC 464. The 7 months were by some added to the last year of Xerxes, and by others were included in the reign of Artaxerxes."[6]

Although all hold to weeks of years in *this* prophesy, some mention should be made as to why, as this is not the normal meaning for the word, "week."

As Kiel comments, “In the form…there thus lies no intimation that it is not common weeks that are meant…The reasons for the opinion that common (i.e. seven-day) weeks are not intended lie partly in the contents of verses 25 & 27, which undoubtedly teach that that which came to pass in the 62 weeks and in the one week could not take place in common weeks…The special account of the contents of the weeks can be adjusted with the year-weeks alone; and the half-week,v.27, particularly appears to be identical in actual time with these 3$_{1/2}$ years (ch.7:25).”[7](See also the 42 months in Rev.11:2;13:5)

Because weeks of years are implied here, some try to make other citations of days and times in Daniel into years such as the “2300 days” concerning the daily sacrifices in Dan.8:14 (though the Hebrew here is not “days’ but “mornings and evenings”); even converting the 3 ½ years (“a time, & times, and the dividing of time”) in ch.7:25 into days (1260) and then back to years again (1260 years). Some also believe God does everything chronologically in cycles, especially using 50-year cycles (Jubilee cycles), and use this as a basis for determining historical dates, including the times in Daniel’s 70 weeks’ prophesy. However, this is esoteric speculation which should have no place in establishing the Bible’s chronology.

As to why most conservative commentators these days believe that there is a gap between the 69th week and the 70th week, briefly stated, it is because the 69th week ended with the Messiah being “cut off” at Christ’s death, and the next 7 years did not end with the destruction of the city, “the end of the war,” and bringing in “everlasting righteousness” as Daniel prophesied.[7a]

Neither did the desecration of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 BC, which only lasted 3 years (1 Macc.1: 57,4:52; Ant.12.7.6[8]), or the destruction by the Romans in 70 AD or 135 AD.

" O Daniel, servant of the living God. Is your God whom you serve continually able to deliver you.?" - king Darius the Mede. Dan. 6:20

Although there have been previous desecrations, antichrists, and destructions of Jerusalem, the book of Revelation shows that Dan.9:26b-27 is fulfilled in *the* antichrist in the end times: "the prince that shall come…shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." Thus, the 70th "week…determined upon thy people," concludes by bringing in the period of "everlasting righteousness," yet to come (Rev.21:3,27).

It begins with Christ's kingdom on earth: "and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom…Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom" Dan.7:22,27. Kiel remarks, "Righteousness is here called "everlasting" corresponding to the eternity of the Messianic kingdom (cf.2:44,7:18,27)."[9]

Kistemaker remarks concerning Christ's reference to Daniel in Mt. 24:15;Mark 13:14; Luke 21:24, which bears on one's interpretation of last things throughout scripture: "The prophetic material found in this sixth discourse has reference not only to events near at hand, but also to those stretching far into the future, as is clear from 24:14, 29-31;25:6,31-36, cf. Luke 21:24).

By the process of prophetic foreshortening, by means of which before one's eyes the widely separated mountain peaks of historic events merge and are seen as one…two momentous events are here intertwined, namely a. the judgment upon Jerusalem (it's fall in the year AD 70), and b. the final judgment at the end of the world's history. Our Lord predicts the city's approaching catastrophe as a type of the tribulation at the end of the dispensation."[10]

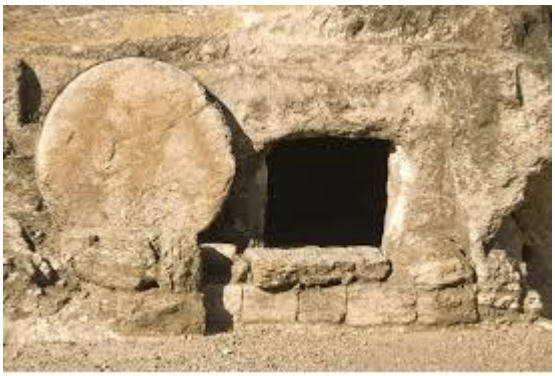
Belshazzar

Another interesting note concerns Daniel's prophesies during the reign of Belshazzar. Daniel prophesied and interpreted dreams, etc. under the reign of different kings, but scholars were puzzled by king Belshazzar in Dan.5. G. Gertoux comments: "The inscriptions of Nabonidus 59 show that in his 3rd year of reign (in -553) he entrusted the kingdom to his eldest son, Belshazzar (Baltasar), and retired to Tema. According to these indications, the actual king of Babylon in -539 was therefore Belshazzar, (in his 14th year of reign), not Nabonidus.

Prior to 1854, Belshazzar had been an enigma for historians and archeologists who knew nothing of him outside the book of Daniel. Both Xenophon (Cyropaedia VII:5;28-30) and Herodotus (The Histories I:191) recount the fall of Babylon to Cyrus the Great, yet neither of these writers give the name of the king of Babylon. Additionally, both Berossus' and Ptolemy's king lists have Nabonidus as the last king of Babylon with no mention of Belshazzar.[11]

CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION

Matt. 27:45, Mark 15:33, and Luke 23:44,45 speak of a 3-hour darkness, from noon to 3 PM on the day when Christ died. Luke records, "A nd it was about the 6th hour and there was darkness over all the earth until the 9th hour. Then *the sun was darkened* and the veil of the temple was torn in two."[1]



Africanus notes that Thallus had attempted to explain away the event: "Thallus, in the 3rd book of his history, explains away the darkness as an eclipse of the sun, unreasonably as it seems to me."[2] Africanus, writing in the year 221 AD, had access to the writings of Thallus. Thallus in his 3rd book wrote that this darkness, which occurred during the reign of Caesar Tiberius, was the result of an eclipse of the sun. Although Luke adds that the sun specifically was darkened, Africanus makes the point that this could not have been a solar eclipse because the crucifixion took place at Passover, which always occurs during a full moon, and during a full moon, there can be no solar eclipse.

Eusebius is variously reported to have stated that Phlegon (c.80-140 AD) stated that Jesus was crucified in the 18th or19th year of Tiberius. Phlegon also made a statement of a "darkness" in Bithynia occurring at this time, more than 500 miles from Jerusalem, during a day on the 4th year of the 202nd Olympiad,[3]which is 32 A.D. (776BC minus 202X4=32 AD, because when the calendar was changed by Exiguus in the 6th century, the year 1 AD follows 1 BC, so add1, but minus 1 for the first Olympic year, inclusive dating). Some have challenged Phlegon, because there was not a solar eclipse then; but of course this was a miraculous sign, a 3-hour total darkness no less.[4] Africanus says, "Phlegon records that, in the time of Tiberius Caesar, at full moon, there was a full eclipse of the sun from the 6th hour to the 9th- manifestly that one of which we speak…Surely no such event as this is recorded for a long period. But it was a darkness induced by God, because the Lord happened then to suffer."[5]

"Phlegon wrote that in the 4th year of the 202nd Olympiad, there was a great darkness over Europe, surpassing anything that ever had been seen. At mid-day, he said, the stars could be seen."[6] Compare this with another supernatural sign, the 3 days of darkness just before the first Passover lamb was slain (Ex.10:23 "They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place, but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings."

The 69 weeks until the Messiah is cut off, begins with 7 weeks when, "…the street shall be built again and the wall, even in troublous times."-Dan.9:25. This would date 444-395 BC, when the rebuilding of Jerusalem was finished.

Also, the 69 weeks of years "from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until the Messiah the Prince ...shall be cut off" in Daniel 9:25,26 evidence a 32 or 33 A.D. crucifixion date. The command was given "in the month Nisan, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes" in 444/445 BC. (Neh. 2:1).

That a 360 day year is spoken of here is evidenced by the length of the 70th week given in Revelation 11:2,3; 12:6,14; & 13:5. "…that they should feed her there 1260 days…where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time...42 months"- Rev.12;6,14;11:2. So 69 x 7 x 360/365.243= 476 years, 24 days. 444+476=32 and omitting the 0 year makes 33 AD the date of Christ's crucifixion. Although the prophecy was only in terms of years, from the month Nissan, even to the month this works out, from Nissan, 444 BC to Nissan 33 AD. (some have attempted to make the exact day, but as the day of the decree is neither stated in the bible, nor is historically known, this is both unnecessary and impossible.)

Many have tried to make this 69x7 years from the command to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah is cut off (Daniel 9:25,26a) come out to the exact day, but as only years are mentioned in the prophesy, and only the month in the decree, the precision need not be to the day (if indeed we could know the day that the decree was given).

Bishop Lloyd proposed that the reason that these 69 weeks of years in Daniel were 360 days long as confirmed by Rev. 11-13, was that they were reckoned according to the 360 day Babylonian year (without any intercalculation), not because they were "prophetic" years as Robert Anderson called them.[7] Note that in Dan.7:25, which is speaking of the 70th week, even as Rev. 11-13 does, it says that the last king, who is the beast of Rev. 13:5-7, shall "think to change times."

Perhaps the reason the 70th week is 360 days is for another reason, namely, that he has changed the year to a 360 day one. "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Dan. 7:25
Luke 3:1 says, "Now in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar…the word of God came unto John." John baptized Jesus which began His ministry (v.21); and verse 23 states, "Now Jesus Himself began His ministry being about 30 years of age."

The date of Tiberius'15th year, when Jesus began his 3 ½ year ministry, has been ably argued to have been from August, 28 AD to August, 29 AD. As Tom Lewis said in 1865, "The reign of Tiberius, as beginning from August 19, 14 AD, was as well known a date in the time of Luke as the reign of Queen Victoria in our own day; and that no simple case has even or can be produced in which the years of Tiberius were reckoned in any other way." [8]

Because of the belief that Christ must have been born in 4 BC, there are those who try to make the well-known date in Luke 3:1 "the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar" into something earlier by beginning his reign 2 years earlier (in 12 AD) than the records state. They do this by imagining a 2-year co-reign between Augustus and Tiberius, but there simply is no evidence of this. They also must adjust every other date.

For example, according to Floyd N Jones, the crucifixion becomes 30 AD, the 20th year of Artaxerxes becomes 454 BC, and the years in Daniel's prophesy become 365.24 day years, contrary to what is stated about the length of the 70th week of Daniel in Rev. 11-13:5. Further, to make the 20th year of Artaxerxes fit, Jones states that there is evidence of a co-reign with his father, Xerxes, beginning 11 years earlier in 474 BC (He further states that the Jews would have counted from this date and not the date of his sole reign.

Ptolmey only records a sole reign beginning in 464 BC). Thus, his 20th year becomes 454 BC, and 483 solar years from that leads to a 30 AD crucifixion. He does not attempt to answer the key scriptural evidence for using 360-day years for the 69 weeks in Dan.9, which is found in the 70th week of that prophesy in Rev.11,12,13. In fact, he states that "there is no scriptural basis for so computing." (p.251)[9]

Sir William Ramsay commented, "Luke 3:23 tells that Jesus appeared before the world as the Teacher when He was about 30 years of age. Now it is characteristic usage in Greek to employ this vague expression, when there is no intention to imply doubt as to the age: it lies in the genius of the language to avoid positiveness in assertion, and to prefer less definite and pronounce and harsh forms of statement. It is unnecessary to think that Luke was really doubtful what was the age of Jesus, whether 28 or 32. His elaborately careful and precise dating, 3:1,2, may be taken as an indication that he had good and accurate information on the subject; that he "had investigated all the circumstances accurately in their origin." But, like a true Greek, he says 'about 30'." [10] From an examination of the events in the gospels, most scholars believe that His ministry lasted approximately 3½ years (3 Passovers mentioned in the gospel of John: ch. 2:23, 6:4,11:56; and ch. 5:1 probably was one). This would make the year of Christ's death either 32 or 33AD.

As the day of the week in which Christ died helps us determine the year He died, we will examine this briefly. There are 3 common theories; Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday. The Wednesday view has only one strong argument, that of Matt. 12: 40's "3 days and 3 nights." Proponents believe that, although the Hebrews reckoned any part of a day as a whole day, that because nights are stated in this one verse also, this is not an idiom. However, scripture is clear that Jesus rose on the first day of the week, on the 3rd day, and not on the 4th as a 3 whole day theory would require.

A scriptural precedent for 3 days and 3 nights being an idom would be Esther 4:16;5:1,4: "…fast for me, and neither eat or drink 3 days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise." This starts on the first day and ends "on the third day," when she broke her fast at the banquet. This suggests only 2 nights, one full day, and 2 partial days.

Hoerner states, "However, if one looks at other New Testament passages referring to Christ's resurrection, it will be immediately obvious that Jesus rose on the third day and not on the fourth.(cf.Mt.16:21;17:23;20:19;27:64;Luke 9:22; 18:33;24:7,21,46; John 2:19-22; Acts 10:40;1 Cor.15:4). Also, it is a well-known fact that the Jews reckoned any part of a day as a whole day." Rabbi Eleazer ben Azariah, c.100 AD, stated, "A day and night are an Onah (a portion of time), and a portion of an Onah is as the whole of it."[11]

Further, there are two systems of reckoning days in both the OT and NT. Hoerner continues, "First to be considered is the reckoning from sunset to sunset…the feast of unleavened bread…(Ex.12:18). This is also true of the day of atonement (Lev.23:32), the weekly Sabbath, (Neh. 13:19), and when there is a single day's ceremonial uncleanness, it ends at the evening (Lev. 11;14:46;15;17:15;22:6; Deut.23:11). The order in which the evening and morning are listed would indicate that days began with the sunset (cf. Deut.1:33;28:66;1 Sam.25:161 Kings 8:29;Esther 4:16;Mark 4:47;5:5;Luke 2:37; etc.).

However, there are some indications that they reckoned from sunrise to sunrise. There are references of the day listed before night: Gen.1:14,16,18;8:22;31:40;Num.14:14;2 Sam.21:10;1 Kings 8:59;Neh.1:6;4:9;Luke 18:7;Acts 9:24;Rev.4:8;etc.

Also, when the expressions "the same day" or "the next day" are used, the context clearly indicates that the night belongs to the first day and not the beginning of a new day… It is thought that the Galileans used a different method of reckoning the Passover than the Judeans.

The Galileans and Pharisees used the sunrise-to-sunrise reckoning whereas the Judeans and Sadducees used the sunset-to-sunset reckoning. Thus, according to the Synoptics, the last supper was a Passover meal.

Since the day was to be reckoned from sunrise, the Galileans, and with them Jesus and His disciples, had the Paschal lamb slaughtered in the late afternoon of Thursday, Nissan 14, and later that evening, they ate the Passover with the unleavened bread.

On the other hand, the Judean Jews who reckoned from the sunset to sunset would slay the lamb on Friday afternoon which marked the end of Nisan 14 and would eat the Passover lamb with the unleavened bread that night which had become Nissan 15.

A scriptural precedent for 3 days and 3 nights being an idom would be Esther 4:16;5:1,4: "…fast for me, and neither eat or drink 3 days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise." This starts on the first day and ends "on the third day," when she broke her fast at the banquet. This suggests only 2 nights, one full day, and 2 partial days.

Thus, Jesus had eaten the Passover meal when His enemies, who had not as yet had the Passover, arrested Him… The statement 'the day of preparation for the Passover' in John 19:14 seems to have reference to the Friday in Passover week rather than the day before the Passover…This is also substantiated in the immediate context where it specifically states that the bodies should be taken off the cross on the day of preparation so that they would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, and they put Jesus in the tomb on the 'Jewish day of preparation' (John 19:31,42)." [12]

The Thursday view is likewise based on Matt.12:40, but makes 3 full nights instead of 4 as the Wednesday view or only 2 nights as a Friday model has. Also, it is based on John 19:31 (at Jesus' death), which says that "Therefore because it was the preparation day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day)…It is thought that this was not also the weekly Sabbath approaching but only a Passover Sabbath; the weekly Sabbath falling the next day. This is based on the fact that in Matt. 28:1, the word translated, Sabbath is plural, and thus should read "Sabbaths": 'In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week.' The Thursday view is forced to make the expression 'the day of preparation' refer to the preparations for the Passover rather than its normal usage referring to Friday, the day of preparation for the Sabbath."

But as Hoerner states, "The Friday crucifixion better explains this by seeing that Nissan 15 fell on the weekly Sabbath, and hence in the year of Christ's crucifixion, that weekly Sabbath was indeed great. Further, to think there is support for the Thursday crucifixion in the plural form of the Sabbath in Matt. 28:1 (lit. 'at the end of the Sabbaths'), which would indicate that the Passover Sabbath (Friday) and the weekly Sabbath (Saturday) were back to back is untenable. The term Sabbath is frequently (1/3 of all of its NT occurrences) in the plural form in the NT when only one day is in view…For example, in Matt.12:1-12, both the singular and plural forms are used."[13]

Also, the proponents of a Thursday crucifixion feel that when John 19:14 says, "And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the 6th hour," refers to the day before the Passover, rather than Friday specifically. But as Hoerner adds, "Both the scriptures (Matt. 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:14,31,42) and Josephus (Ant 16.6.2) indicate the day of preparation is the day before the weekly Sabbaths, namely Friday…." There is good evidence that the early church believed that He was crucified on Friday.

The public readings of scriptures in the churches, as evidenced in their lectionaries, reveals the common practice of reading the account of the crucifixion alone (Matt.27:1-61) on Good Friday (they read the account of Jesus in the Garden on Thursday). Burgon remarks, "Chrysostom clearly alludes to this practice; which Augustine expressly states was also the practice in his own day." [14]

One criticism of The Friday crucifixion are the 4 passages which speak of His resurrection "*after* 3 days" (Matt. 27:63; Mark 8:31;9:31;10:34). However, there are eleven verses which speak of His resurrection "*on* the 3rd day" (Matt. 16:21;17:23;20:19;27:64;Luke 9:22;18:33;24:7,21,46;Acts 10:40,I Cor. 15:4). Obviously, these phrases mean the same thing: a period of time extending to the third day. The OT likewise uses these terms (see Gen 42:17,1 Kings 20:29, 2 Chron. 10:5,12; Esther 4:16,5:1;1 Sam.30:12,13).

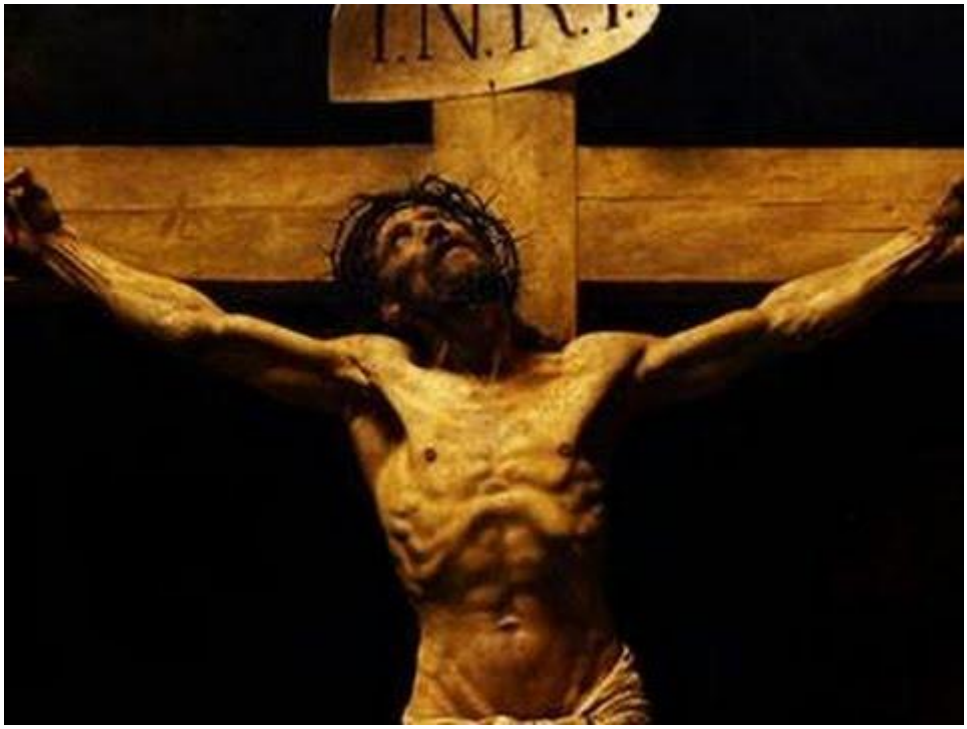
For example, Esther says "…neither eat nor drink for 3 days night nor day…and so will I go to the king"-Esther 4:16, but she does not see the king on the 4th day, as a literal "3 days and nights" would require. Esther 5:1 says "Now it happened on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court…"

In conclusion then, with the most natural reading of the NT, one would conclude that Jesus was crucified on Friday and was resurrected on Sunday. This is also the common consensus of the church fathers and scholars throughout church history, and it is the view generally accepted today. Good Friday is also is supported from a number of early sources, as the Gospel of Peter and Babylonian Talmud that state that Jesus died on the eve of the Passover, on Nissan 14, when the Passover lambs were slain; and according to Anderson, only in 33 AD (and possibly 30 AD) would Nissan 14 fall on a Friday (In 32 AD it fell on Thursday). Being, as we have seen, 30 AD is too early, 33 AD is the most likely year of Christ's sacrifice[15]

Others have said the Passover dates are not that certain. For example, Humphries and others now say the Passover in 32 AD fell on Sunday instead of Thursday. (Cranfill,p.27; Jeffries, p.29, Anderson). Humphries says, "As is well known, various authors have attempted to use astronomy to provide a solution to this problem. This is not straightforward however, since, although astronomical calculations can accurately specify the times of new and full moons, we do not know with what skill the Jews of the first century could detect the first faintly glowing lunar crescent following conjunction with the sun (the new moon itself being invisible, of course).

CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION

The Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar, which in the 1st century AD, was determined by observing the new lunar crescent…The first day of each month was the day of first visibility…The main problem in reconstructing the Jewish calendar is to determine which months were 29 days long and which 30 days. In our previous work, we computed the visibility of the lunar crescent seen from Jerusalem using the most recent theory, in which we can have considerable confidence."[16]



There is also geological evidence for the year of the crucifixion. Earthquakes have been known to occur in the dead sea area for the past 4000 years. Some of these are dated by historical accounts and others by assuming a steady rate of sedimentation from the historically dated earthquakes. And these can be dated by the mixed layers in the laminated sediments of the dead sea and crosschecking these with known historical earthquakes in the area; such as Amos' earthquake in 750 BC (Amos 1:1) and the Qumran earthquake of 31 BC spoken of by Josephus.[17]The next mixed layer occurs in 33 AD, and there is no other until 1033 AD.

Matthew 27:51-4 speaking of the Lord's death says, "…the earth did quake and the rocks rent." This quake is dated at 63 years after the 31 BC earthquake by assuming a steady rate of sedimentation, which method lines up well with all the historical earthquakes in that area we know of.[18]

Epilogue

This brings us to the end of our study. Note that **all these dates in these chronological models could be ascertained from the Bible's data alone**. Counting back from the cross, one can reckon to 464 BC (Daniel 9:25, Neh. 2:1-5). We know the 6th year of Darius I, 515 BC (and his reign continues) ends the 70 years of desolation spoken of in Zechariah (1:7, 12:7, 7:1-5) which began in the 11th year of Zedekiah, 586 BC (2 Chron. 36:11); and we can trace this event back to creation. This only leaves a period from 464 BC to 515 BC to be ascertained. We know 12 years of Ahasuerus (Xerxes) reign (Esther 3:7), and he reigned after this (10:10). In addition, Neh. 12 mentions the 32nd year of Artaxerxes, and Ezra 4:5-7 puts these kings in order: Darius-Ahasuerus-Artaxerxes. Thus, if we estimate the reigns of Darius I and Ahasuerus, based on an average of the king's reigns mentioned and events transpiring in Scripture for this period, our entire timeline, creation to Christ, would be complete. (Fortunately, we do not have to estimate the length of these reigns, as secular records provide us with the details for this period.)

Also, note that these models are not made to fit any millennial, septenary, or other number scheme as many chronologies are. For example, both a well-known 4th century midrash (Tanna de be Eliyyahu/1/) and Bishop Ussher's 17th century chronology have exactly 4 millennia between creation and the Messiah (Christ).[1]Some of Ussher's important dates are made to fit either millennial or septenary patterns. For example, he places the dedication of Solomon's temple exactly 3000 years after Creation at the start of the 9th Jubilee, Christ's birth 4000 years after Creation, and other dates in multiples of 49 years, such as the 30th Jubilee beginning in Jesus' 30th year. Ussher puts 4 BC for Christ's birth, 4004 for the date of Creation, and 1997 for His return.[2] The amazing thing is; many people in the 21st century have accepted most or all of Ussher's dates uncritically.

The Jews have a 4th century midrash which states, "...The world (in it's present form) is to last six millennia; the first two millennia are to be an age of *tohu* (chaos), the next two millennia--an age of Torah, the next two millennia--the age of the Messiah." [3] Rabbi Silver adds that the earlier Jews, in the 1st century believed in exactly 5000 years of history before a millennium of consummation and universal blessedness, and believed they were very near it; "their present creation calendar (putting creation at 3760 BC), which did not make its appearance until considerably later."[4]

The Jewish calendar however, is based on a chronology which shortens the reigns of the Persian kings by 154 years. This chronology called the Seder Olam Rabbah ("Book of the Order of the World), was compiled in about 150 AD by Yose ben Halafta, and covers the time from Creation to the revolt of Simon bar Kokhba in 132 AD (his death was in 135 AD). It also puts Terah's age at 70 instead of 130 at Abram's birth. It confuses the king Darius who reigned at the building of the 2nd temple with the king Darius who was conquered by Alexander the Great many years later; thus eliminating all the Persian rulers in between.

Jewish commentators say that this was purposely done "by Divine command" to confuse anyone who would use Daniel's prophesies to predict the time of the coming Messiah, and to honor Dan. 12:4, "Shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end."

Of course, this makes God a deceiver, but anything is better than having scripture point to Christ as their Messiah; as it is obvious that this was done to cover up the fact that Daniel's prophesy in Dan.9:25 of 69 weeks of years until the Messiah was cut off pointed to Jesus of Nazareth.

Instead, the years are made up to point to near the death of Simon bar Kokhba (c.135 AD), who, Jews of the day thought was the Messiah. These, plus some other adjustments, give us their present date for Creation at 3760 BC.

While the Encyclopedia Judaica admits the error and states, "The most significant confusion in Jose's calculation is the compression of the Persian period, from the rebuilding of the temple by Zerubbabel in 516 BC to the conquest of Persia by Alexander (331BC), to no more than 34 years."[5] Still, orthodox Jews cannot reject it because of it's talmudic authority.

"As Rabbi Shwab stated, 'Our traditional chronology is based on Seder Olam because of the authority of its author. It is therefore quite inconceivable that any post-Talmudic teacher could possible "reject" those chronological calculations which have been the subject of many a Talmudic discussion."[5] This is the reason that it is still their chronology. Jones adds, "Bar Kokhba had been declared the long-awaited Messiah by the foremost Jewish scholar of that day, the highly venerated Rabbi Akiva...it is a work of talmudic authority, and to openly contradict it would be unthinkable to orthodox Jews."[6] **Amazing (to me) how intelligent people would disavow both verifiable history and the bible (Daniel) just to uphold their tradition.**

Number Patterns:

Davis says, "During the inter-testamental era, numbers were given considerable attention by teachers interested in future events. Numerical patterns were manipulated quite frequently and freely by these teachers in order to predict certain events, and this practice led to considerable frustration on the part of the people.

Russel comments: '…in their attempts to fulfill unfulfilled prophesy, they make fairly frequent use of what we might call allegorical arithmetic, in which much play is made with figures and cycles and number patterns.'... With the rise of the Gnostic heresies in the apostolic and post-apostolic era, considerable attention was given to the theological value of numbers and their mystical use in Scripture...it was Augustine who gave the final stamp of approval to number symbolism...and one should remember that Augustine, along with the other fathers, was strongly influenced by the early Gnostic heresies and Pythagorean theories with regard to symbolic numerology. It is rather interesting that not one NT writer ever pointed back to the significance of a symbolic number occurring in the OT. This seems rather strange if the phenomenon was so apparent.

It is the view of this writer that the only number used symbolically in the Scripture to any degree with discernable significance is the number 7…. the distinctive theological truths of the bible were written in the language of its day, employing well-known idioms and literary devices. The use of the number seven symbolically was a common phenomenon among the nations surrounding ancient Israel.

As early as the time of Abraham (c. 2000 BC) the number 7 was employed symbolically. According to Smith, the number 7: "is found in reference to ritual in the age of Gudea…'Seven gods' at the end of an enumeration meant 'all the gods'" [7]

Much has been written using number systems to make the bible's chronology fit into patterns and to predict the future; especially multiple Jubilees and Millennial periods. Fortunately, it is passed 2000 AD now, and we won't be hearing any more statements about exactly 2 millennia between the 1st and 2nd advents of Christ (although some still hold to exactly two millennia for the church age).[8] Unfortunately, other supposed numerical patterns will continue to fascinate.

However, after all the failed predictions in recent years, most prophesy "specialists" who still hold to number patterns and mystical interpretations have become date suggesters, instead of date setters; thereby giving them an excuse when their prophesies do not come to pass at the imagined date. (some even resorting to going beyond the scriptures to back up their claims for end time dates they say are based on scripture, e.g: the end of the Mayan calendar, or Nostradamas' prophesies, or bible codes (equidistant letter sequences).

Calendars

Ancient civilizations used a variety of ways to mark years. For example, a seasonal calendar has 2-4 seasons to the year, and one could average the days between successive springs (or events such as the flooding of the Nile river in Egypt) and arrive at a 365-day year. In fact, the Egyptians probably as far back as Babel noticed that the dog star, Sirius, appeared in the Eastern sky just before sunrise after a year of invisibility (and the annual flooding of the Nile coincided with this). The lunar calendar is 12 moons (measured from new moon to new moon) or 354 days, 12 months of 29 or 30 days with inter-calculation to approximate a solar year (although inter-calculation varied, later in Babylon they added an extra month every 2-3 years in a 19-year cycle). The civil calendar used for business transactions and festivals was12 months of 30 days each. The luni-solar calendar was 365 days in Egypt (12 thirty day months plus 5 extra days at the end of the year), and a true solar year is 365.24 days.[1] As Sir Isaac Newton states, "All nations before the just length of the solar year was known, reckoned months by the course of the moon, and years by the return of winter and summer, and spring and autumn…"[2]

The New Encyclopedia Britannica states, "However many there seemed to be, it was everywhere recognized that seasons were related to the Sun, and that they could be determined from solar observations. These might consist of noting the various length of the midday shadow cast by a stick thrust vertically into the ground or follow the far more sophisticated procedure of deducing from nocturnal observations the Sun's position against the background of the stars. In either case, the result was a year of 365 days…"[3]

Our question is what calendars were used in computing the years given in scripture. The only scriptural evidence we have for the length of the years is from Noah's flood, Daniel's 70 weeks prophesy given in Babylon in the 1st year of Cyrus (538 BC), and John's vision (at about 95 AD) of the fulfillment of that 70th week (in the future). In all three cases, the months are defined as 30 days in length, and the 70 weeks are defined as 70 weeks of years of 360 days each.

Only five months are specified in the flood account, but the 5 month period between the 2nd month and 7th month was 150 days long (Gen.7:11,24;8:3,4). If indeed civilization then did use a 360 day calendar, they still would have had some means to make the seasons regular, and thus the years 365 day years.[4] As we do not know what inter-calculations were used in Noah's day to make their seasons regular, (likely some system such as ancient Egypt adding 5 extra days at the end of their 12 months of 30 days), the timelines proposed herein will use the 360 day year only for the prophetic statements made in Babylonian Captivity (thus in Daniel 9, the 70 weeks (of years) is 360÷365 x7x70 =483 years and the 69 weeks (of years) is 476 years), and use a normal 365 day solar year for all other dates obtained, as it is likely that the non-prophetic years would in any case be adjusted according to the seasons. The extra .24 day a year loss which was not adjusted for, as Egypt did not, only amounts to 2 years in our timeline Adam to Nehemiah.

Calendars

Although some believe the years in Genesis should be taken as 360 day years because Noah's account of the flood specifies 30 day months, it is reasonable to assume that ancient civilizations even before the flood had various calendars and were astronomically literate, and by Noah's day, one might even postulate an intercalculation of their 354 or 360 day calendars based on the position of the earth relative to the stars, even as ancient Egypt from long ago had a calendar year that was made by observing the heliacal rising of Sirius yearly.

There is also the idea that the 360 day year mentioned in Gen. 7:11-8:4 was not just a civil year, but the true length of the solar year then, believing that the earth had a faster revolution around the sun originally, and after Noah's flood, a slower sidereal revolution to give us the present 365.24 day year, or a slower rotation rate of the earth on its axis originally and a faster rate now. Morris argues: "Between the 2nd month's 17th day and the 7th month's 17th day were 150 days. Thus 5 months averaging 30 days each were involved. A very regular order in the "very good" (Gen.1:31) is implied. Today's 365 ¼ day year must be an altered remnant of created order." [5] There is also the idea that the calendar will be changed back again to 360 days in a year during the seven-year tribulation period, as this length year is specified in the Book of Revelation, ch.11-13. Also, Dan. 7:25 says, "And he shall speak great things against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws..."

All chronologists I know of who have developed a complete chronology from creation to Christ believe that theirs is an absolute (+/- a few years) chronology, and if you disagree with them, you are certainly wrong, even unbiblical. As is obvious by all the differing models, there is not enough evidence to hold to absolute dates. Moreover, it is still a truism that people will be convinced of things which they wish to believe, regardless of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. While doctrinal matters need to be settled in one's mind, determining fixed dates in history does not.

Because of differences in counting the years in a kings reign during the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah, either by the number of new years occurring during his reign (accession method), or partial years of each year reigning counting as whole years (non-accession method), or viceroys when a father and son reigned at the same time; or 360 days possibly counted as a year at various times in history, no chronology will be exact, or can even be considered "standard" despite the claims of some. Still, the hope is that with the multitude of information we have in the bible, we build as definite and accurate as possible timeline for the events in the history of the world before Christ.

Ezekiel 4

"In the 5th day of the month, which was the 5th year of king Jehoiachin's captivity, the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel…take a tile and lay it before you, and portray upon it the city of Jerusalem; and lay siege against it…This shall be a sign to the house of Israel. Lie also upon your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it; according to the number of the days that you shall lie upon it, you shall bear their iniquity.

For I have laid upon you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, 390 days, so shall you bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when you have accomplished them, lie again on your right side, and you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah 40 days; I have appointed you each day for a year…according to the number of the days that you shall lie upon your side, 390 days shall you eat thereof…and you shall bake it with dung…Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the gentiles whither I will drive them." Ezek. 4:1-13.

This word came in 592 BC. The 390 years of "the iniquity of the house of Israel" has been proposed to refer to the years of the divided kingdom, from Jeroboam to Zedekiah, the house of Israel being represented also in Jerusalem. That Jeroboam began their years of iniquity is clear from 1 Kings 12:28-31; 2 Kings 17:7-23: "Whereupon the king took counsel and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, 'It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: Behold your gods, Oh Israel which brought you up out of the land of Egypt.'...For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight..." If they are 360-day years as used in Babylon (and in Daniel's prophesy), this would be 384.4 years, bringing us to 976 BC for Jeroboam's reign.

The house of Israel is also included with those in Jerusalem. As Ezekiel says, "Ah Lord God, will You destroy all the residue of the house of Israel in Your pouring out of Your fury upon Jerusalem?" (Ez.9:8). Cranfill states, "Over the years a number of members of all ten tribes repudiated the Northern Kingdom and allied themselves with the house of David in the Southern Kingdom, so that "Judah" represented all 12 tribes."[1] Fairly early in the divided kingdom period, numbers of the 10 tribes moved to Judah.

2 Chron. 15:9 states, "And he (Asa) gathered all Judah and Benjamin and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and
Manasseh and out of Simeon, for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance when they saw that his God was with him."

Jones adds, "It must be noted that even though the Kingdom of Israel had been terminated and all but the poorest of its people carried away from the land and resettled in the farthest regions of the Assyrian Empire back in BC 721 (2 K.17;18:9-12), Judah had long before become a truly representative kingdom. On several occasions, mass emigrations of people from all the tribes left the Northern Kingdom and went down to live in the Southern Kingdom (2 Chron.11: 13-17; 12:1,6; 15:8,9;35:17-19)…Thus we see the Ezekiel 4:4—8 passages are completely apropos in assigning the 390 year prophesy to "Israel" over a century and a quarter after that kingdom had ceased to exist as an entity. Hence in time, the realm of Judah came to consist of all "Israel" (thus there are no 10 missing tribes), and the sin of idolatry begun by Jeroboam (I) continued to be a snare to Israel and the Southern Kingdom in the days of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 4:13; 5:4; 6:2,4-5,11;8:4,10-11,etc).." [2]

Jeremiah, prophesying in Judah a century after the Northern kingdom had been deported, ("So Israel was carried away out of their own land to this day." 2 K 17:23-4) still speaks to "all the families of the House of Israel" in Judah. Jer. 2:2,4 states, "Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem… 'Hear ye the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel...'"

In 722 BC, Sargon said, "The governor of Samaria opposed me, not to do service and not to bring tribute…I clashed with them…and counted as spoil 27,280 people, together with their chariots…and the gods in whom they trusted…I restored the city of Samaria…I brought into it people from the countries conquered by my own hands." [3]

In support of this 390 year interpretation is the prophesy against Edom in Ezek. 35:5 "Behold, O Mount Seir…Because you have had a perpetual hatred, and have shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end." Psalm 137:7 adds, "Remember O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem who said, Raise it, raise it even to the foundation thereof." (see Edom's sin in Obadiah 10-14). If this refers to the end of the 390 years of iniquity in Ezekiel 4, we could calculate back from the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC (or from the "siege" of Jerusalem in 588 BC (2 K.25:1,2)) to the beginning of the divided kingdom and arrive at a date for this of 975 BC, as James Ussher did.[4]

That Israel sinned grievously from the very beginning of this period, note Jeroboam's sins in 1 Kings 12:28 and 14:16: "And He shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin."

However, what do the 40 years of "the iniquity of the house of Judah" refer to? It may be that the 40 years speaks of Israel's apostasy under the especially evil reign of Manasseh (see 2 Kings 21). Manasseh's provocations may well have been a 40-year period. He reigned 55 years (2 Chron. 33:1), and the last portion of his reign was godly.

Then, after his evil son, Amon, rules for 2 years, Josiah rules for 18 years and says, "Great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD..." (2 Chron. 34:21).

However, this coming judgment upon Judah was not conditional on repentance, despite Josiah's very godly reforms, specifically because of Manasseh's sins: "And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, **because** of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, for that which he did in Jerusalem." (Jer. 15:4)

"Notwithstanding, the LORD turned not from the fierceness of His great wrath wherewith His anger was kindled against Judah because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked Him withal...Because Manasseh, king of Judah, has done all these abominations, and has done wickedness above all that the Amorites did which were before him, and has made Judah also to sin with his idols, therefore, thus says the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah that whosoever hears of it, both his ears shall tingle." 2 Kings 21: 26,11,12.

Another explanation for this is that the years of "bearing their iniquity" refers to future punishment, as a consequence for all their history of evil, and not specific years that each house was especially evil; the language in Ezekiel 4 being too similar to the words in Numbers 14:34 to be coincidental: "After the number of the days in which you searched the land, even 40 days, each day for a year, shall you bear your iniquities, even 40 years." God spoke this when they had wandered 2 of the 40 years that this time period referred to.

The one clue we have is verse 13…" even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the gentiles whither I will drive them." This model would add the years 390 and 40, the number 430 being the key number here; the 390 and 40 being representative of their relative sinfulness as tribes (the total number 430 reflective of their bondage and sojourn in a strange land, in Egypt).

As Keil says, “But to reckon the two periods together has not only no argument against it, but is even suggested by the circumstance that the prophet, while reclining on his left and right sides, is to represent the siege of Jerusalem.”[5] Adding the 430 years to 592 BC=162BC & brings us to the Maccabean revolt when Jerusalem became self governing once more. This also does not require 390 years for the kings’ period (345 is more likely).

Mattathias started the revolt in 167 BC and fighting continued off and on until 142 BC. Kaye says, “The Jews were granted full religious and political freedom under the Maccabees.”(religious freedom 1st, political later) Even until the time of Herod, the Jews were self-governed, by the priestly family of the Hasmoneans.[6] 2 Maccabees 15: 28,37 reads, “Nicanor lay dead in his harness…and from that time forth, the Hebrews had the city in their power.” Ussher adds, "After Nicanor's death, Judea had rest from wars for awhile (1 Ma.7:50).[7]

Hanukkah celebrates the event in 164 BC when Judah Maccabeas retook Jerusalem from the Syrian Greeks, and “cleansed the sanctuary.” From then on (or some say from the slaying of the commander, Nicanor in 161 BC), it remained in control of the Jews until Pompey took Jerusalem in 63 BC.[8c]

Judah became fully politically independent in 142 BC. In the 10th year of Zedekiah (Jer. 32:1), Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem in fulfillment of this prophesy in Ezekiel 4 and burned it in the next year in 586/587 BC (Jer. 39:2). So 164 BC to 156 BC would have to coincide with the end of “eating their defiled bread among the gentiles” according to this model. Kiel states, “For the coming period of punishment, which is to commence for Israel with the siege of Jerusalem, is fixed at 430 years with reference to the Egyptian bondage of the Israelites.”[9]

The Damascus Document Scroll, 4Q271D[f], found in Cave 4 at Qumran

A document supporting this interpretation is the Dead Sea Scrolls "Damascus Document." 1.3-11 states, "And in the time of wrath- 390 years after he had given them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon- he visited them and caused a root of planting to grow from Israel…but they were like the blind and those who grope for the way for 20 years…and He raised for them a teacher of righteousness."[10]

Lastly, there is a theory adding the 390 & 40 years together to 430 years, and beginning these "years of iniquity" with Solomon's 4th year while ending them at the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC. The 390 supposedly begin with Jeroboam's 4th year, supposedly when he set up idol worship.

This would correspond with a simple addition of the reigns of the kings of Judah. However, there seems to be no reason to begin the 40 "years of iniquity" with Solomon's 4th year, as he and those who followed him did not turn away from the Lord until his latter years (1Kings 11:33).

These sins caused the kingdom to be divided between the house of Israel, the 10 tribes in the North, and the house of Judah, in the South. (The terms "house of Israel" and "house of Judah" had already delineated these areas earlier, 2 Sam 1:12,2:4-11,6:5,16:3,19:41-20:2).

In support of beginning these years of iniquity with Jeroboam is 1 Kings 14:15,16, which says that the Lord "shall root up Israel out of his good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river…and He shall give Israel up **because** of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin." Rehoboam and Judah at this time were also very sinful, "And Rehoboam, the son of Solomon reigned in Judah…and Judah did evil…above all that their fathers had done."(1 Kings 14:22), but ultimate judgment was not pronounced on Judah until Manasseh's especially evil reign (Jer.15:4).

Synchronisms with Assyria

The Problem:

Thiele says, "So we find that whereas the chronologies of Assyria and of the Old Testament coincide at a period late in the 8th century B.C., about the middle of the 8th century, there seems to be a discrepancy of 16 years or more, and if we go back another century, the discrepancy increases to almost 50 years." [1]

Eponym list solution:

Thiele adds, "…the Assyrians followed the practice of each year appointing to the office of eponym, or limmu, some high official of the court, the governor of a province, or the king himself. The limmu held office for a calendar year, and to that year was given the name of the individual occupying the position of limmu. Historical events in Assyria were usually dated in terms of these limmus, although at times they might be dated in terms of the year of the reign of the king, and on occasion both the year of reign and the eponymous year were given…

Fortunately, the Assyrians followed the custom of preserving lists of eponyms, many of which are available today…None of these lists is perfect for the entire period, each of them being broken in places…. but where one tablet may be broken, the missing name or names may in many instances be supplied from the other tablets…

Of particular interest among the limmu lists are a number of tablets which give not only the names of the eponyms, but their titles or positions and the principal events during the various eponymies…. One item of particular interest is a notice of an eclipse of the sun, which took place in the month Simanu, in the eponymy of Bur-Sagale. Astronomical computations have fixed this as June 15, 763. With the year of the eponymy of Bur-Sagale fixed at 763 BC, the year of every other name of the complete canon can likewise be fixed. The Assyrian lists extant today provide a reliable record of the annual limmmu official from 891 to 648 BC; and for this period, they provide reliable dates in Assyrian history…Of vital concern to us is the fact that we have here a pattern of Assyrian chronology exactly paralleling that of the divided Hebrew monarchies.

Some of the points of contact between the Divided kingdoms and Assyrian history are the battle of Qarqar between Ahab and Shallmaneser III in 853 BC from the Monolith Inscription, and Jehu payng tribute to him in his 18th year in 841 BC from the Black Obelisk, the conquest of the Northern Kingdom (Hoshea, 2 Kings 17:3-6) in 722 BC by Shallmaneser V, Senecharib's attack on Jerusalem (Hezekiah, 2 Kings 18:13, Isaiah 36:1), Pul and Menahem (2 Kings 15:19), Tiglath-Pileser III and Pekah (2 Kings 15:29), and Tiglath-Pileser III and Ahaz (2 Kings 16:7-9). Some caution should be noted here. Faulstich comments, "The inconsistencies in Shalmanesser's annals would make it impossible to accurately date the battle of Qarkar." Luckenbill cautions, 'It is possible that the first of these, which contained a full account of the events of the year of accession, belong to a much earlier period.'[2]

Various efforts have been put forth to identify this eclipse with that of June 24, 791, or with that of June 13, 809. These efforts have usually been prompted by the attempt to create some system of Assyrian chronology, which will be more in keeping with certain preconceived ideas of *Biblical* chronology. Such attempts introduce not harmony but confusion into both Hebrew and Assyrian history.

In the endeavor to discredit the reliability of the testimony of the eponym canon efforts are made to postulate a break in the canon, usually early in the 8th century BC. The suggestion has been made that a whole block of 51 consecutive names, from 834 to 783 BC; has been dropped from the canon and that all dates based on the canon beyond 783 BC are 51 years too low. According to this hypothesis, the Assyrian date of 911 BC, the 1st year of Adad-nirari II, which synchronizes with the accession of Asa, would be 962 BC based upon the evidence of "biblical" chronology (see Martin Anstey[3]). …There exists no evidence of any kind of a break in the eponym canon…"[4]

Assyrian warriors

Another notable correlation between biblical history and other nations that has been suggested is between Shishak, king of Egypt, and Jeroboam, king of Judah. 1 Kings 10:40,14:25 says, "Jeroboam arose and fled into Egypt unto Shishak, king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon…and it came to pass in the 5th year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made."

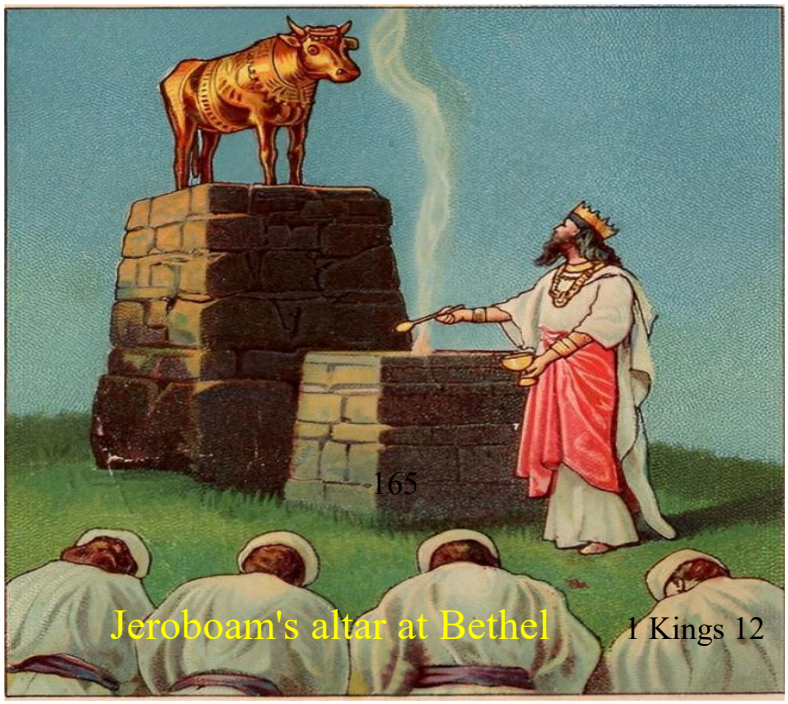
Many Bible scholars believe this was the the first Shoshenk of Egyptian history, whose campaign list was discovered in 1828. Thus, they believe we can correlate Egyptian chronology here with this period in Israel's history. However, it has been pointed out that, "The list mainly contains place names in Israel, the Judahite section being almost totally obliterated. Jerusalem does not appear on the list." [5] In addition, Rohl adds, "The main campaign route did not enter the kingdom of Judah, but rather skirted its border…If Shoshenk 1 is to be equated with the biblical Shishak, why did he attack his ally Jerobaom in Israel whilst meticulously avoiding an incursion into the territory of his enemy, Rehoboam, king of Judah?…Whilst Shishak attacks Judah…Shoshenk attacks Israel and does not mention Jerusalem as one of the defeated cities in his campaign record …" [6]

Besides, Shoshenq was a common name then, shared with at least 6 kings and 4 other officials in Shoshenq 1's dynasty alone. Shoshenq IIa, 979-970 BC has been proposed as a better candidate for Shishak because of his wealth at his death (which may have come from the spoils of Shishak at Jerusalem).[7]

Anstay says, "By piecing together the various parts of the 7 canons, a list of the annual Eponyms of Assyria has been made for the period from BC 911 (Assyrian dates) =BC 962 to BC 647. There are several gaps of a few years in which a number of names have been lost, and it is believed by one school of Assyriologists that a whole block of 51 consecutive names, from BC 834 to 783, has been dropped out, so that the names from BC 783 and upwards (Assyrian dates) are really those of the Eponyms for BC 834 and upwards.

This view of the canon is the one that agrees with the chronology of the Old Testament.
It is the view held in a modified form by Prof. Oppert, rev. D.H.Haigh, Willis J. Beecher and other authorities, whilst Schrader, Sir H. Rawlinson and E.A.W.Budge (in the British Museum Guide) regard the canon as we have it as complete, and adhere to the Assyrian dates, which throw all Old Testament and all Egyptian synchronisms above the year BC 783, 51 years out of joint. …

Of course, the canon itself gives us no dates. On the side of the shorter chronology of the Assyrian dates, there is simply the list of names which constitute the canon, confirmed by certain long numbers which may be regarded as proving that the later Assyrian scribes, who compiled and copied and preserved these Eponym lists, held them to be continuous, but the authority of these scribes is that of late compilers, not that of contemporary witnesses…Syncellus says the records for this period were tampered with, and he assigns this as the reason why Ptolmey's canon went back no further than BC 747."[8]



The Extra "Cainan"

There is an extra name in the genealogies in Luke 3:36 between Salah and Arphaxad, which is not found in the genealogies in the Old Testament. This is listed three times; once in Gen. 11(verse 12) and twice in 1 Chronicles 1(verses 18 & 24). Numerous solutions have been proposed in the past. The main theories are: 1. Moses omitted the extra Cainan to make the lists symmetrical, Adam to Noah and Noah to Abraham.
2. Cainan and Salah were the same person. 3. Cainan was a brother of Salah.
4. Later copyists excluded Cainan from Gen. 11 because of a moral offense. 5. A copy error in the Hebrew MSS. 6. An interpolation in the LXX, Luke merely using the list from the popular bible of his day. 7. A later copy error of Luke's gospel. 8. A deliberate addition to later copies of Luke's gospel (from a popular legend).

The Hebrew scribes would never dare to change even a jot in transcribing the sacred words of God. On the other hand, the translators of the LXX in Egypt are known to have changed many words and especially the numbers in Genesis to fit more with Egyptian history (Manetho). Note especially the additions of 100 years to the age at which each patriarch begat the next one in two sections of Genesis 5 & 11. A similar situation exists with the Samaritan. As Smith says, "It differs in several important points from the Hebrew text…. emendations of passages and words of the Hebrew text which contain something objectionable in the eyes of the Samaritans, on account either of historical improbability or apparent want of dignity in the terms applied to the Creator. Thus, in the Samaritan Pentateuch, no one in the antediluvian times begets his first son after he has lived 150 years; but 100 years are, where necessary, subtracted before and added after the birth of the first son."[1]

Also, The Jews in Alexandria were enamored with adding stories to the accounts in Genesis in their Pseudepegriphal literature; especially stories about angels (Watchers). One such story added an extra patriarch to those in Genesis, a second person named Cainan between Arphaxad and Salah. Commenting on these extra biblical books, Zachary Smith says, "With the translation of the OT into Greek around 250 BC, the Jewish people (particularly those outside of Palestine) began a transition from traditional thought to Judeo-Hellenistic thinking. This involved the melding of Grecian philosophies, most notably Stoicism and Epicureanism, with OT theology. As the digression from traditional thought occurred, a new group of writings was sought that would help reconcile the sometimes-opposing viewpoints of Judaism and Hellenism. The result was the Apocrypha and OT Pseudepegripha-books that were the middle ground between the truth of the OT and the mythology and humanistic philosophies of the Greco-Roman world."[2]

Moreover, the extra 'Cainan' is not just part of a genealogical list where one might posit a copy error occurring from one verse to the next, as has been proposed in Luke 3, but there is a story about him: "Arphaxad..bore..Cainan…and he found a writing, which the ancestors engraved on stone; and he read what was in it, and he transcribed it. And he sinned because of what was in it, since there was in it the teaching of the Watchers by which they used to observe the omens of the sun, moon, and stars within all the signs of heaven. And he…begot a son and he called him Shelah." (Jubilees 8:1-5, c.100 BC).

Charlesworth comments, "Gen. 6:1-4 alludes to the sons of God who had intercourse with the daughters of the people. 1 Enoch transforms this idea into a theology of fallen angels, who consorted with women and produced giants who sinned against the people. "They corrupted the people through the instruction in forbidden sciences like making arms, cosmetics, precious metals."[3] (vol.1, p.9).

1 Enoch 6:6-7:4 says, "And they were altogether 200, and they descended into Ardos which is the summit of Hermon…and they took wives unto themselves… and they taught them magical medicine, incantations, and the cutting of roots, and (about plants).
And the women became pregnant and gave birth to great giants whose heights were 300 cubits (450'). These giants consumed the produce of all the people until the people detested feeding them. So, the giants turned against the people in order to eat them." Vol.1, p. 16.

Jubilees 5:1,2 says, "and they took wives for themselves… and they bore children for them and they were the giants. And injustice increased on the earth, and all flesh corrupted its way…and they began to eat each other." (vol. 2, p. 64).[3]

Some early Christian leaders, such as Tertullian (c.200 AD), also held some of this literature in high regard, and the Ethiopian Jews canonized the book of Jubilees, equating it with scripture.[4]

It would therefore be too **unlikely a coincidence** that an extra Cainan were copied inadvertently in a copy of Luke in exactly the spot in which the popular book of Jubilees recorded it. The main argument for a copy error is that in the LXX of Gen 11:12, this extra Cainan has identical years as the next patriarch, Selah, both 130 years before and 330 years after paternity, which too is an unlikely coincidence.

However, as we have shown, the evidence for the source of this 2nd Cainan is the book of Jubilees, and its inclusion in both Luke and the LXX is to provide an historical basis for the popular story of this fictional character. That the years for both Salah and this supposed Cainan in later copies of the LXX are identical is therefore also intentional.

In fact, it has been noted that Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch (died c.184 AD) had a scheme for the supposed 6 millenary ages of the world (a popular belief then, which needed two 3000 year periods, divided at Peleg's son's birth) which added up only with the addition of this second Cainan in Gen.11(LXX). Anstay adds, "Demetrius (170 BC) is quoted by Polyhistor (1st c. BC) as having reckoned 1070 years from the flood to the birth of Abraham…The LXX makes…942 years without, or 1072 years with Cainan. It is plain therefore that Cainan was included in the copy of the LXX which he used." (Anstey, p. 84 from Eusebius'Proep.Evang. ix.2134d. Charlesworth, "Demetrius" p. 843).

Some of the years in the account by Eusebius, however, seem to be later emendations; and in Exodus 6:20, the LXX has 132 years for the life of Amram, but the Demetius quote has 136 years, which is the same as the Sam. and the Lucian revision of the LXX (c.300 AD), so that one might posit that some of these numbers were changed sometime after Demetrius (although there is no evidence for a change in 2:18 where he follows the LXX in computing 3624 years from Adam to Egypt, and 1360 years from the Flood to Egypt). [5]

Although our earliest copies of the LXX and of Luke's gospel do not contain this extra Cainan, the vast majority of copies and versions do. Significantly, it is missing in our earliest copy of Luke, P75 (200 AD), and in Beza's ancient copy (a 5th century copy of a 2nd century MS); and neither the early Jewish historian Josephus (c.70 AD) nor the more ancient Samaritan Pentateuch (c.650 BC) contain it. The early Christian chronographer, Africanus (c.220 AD) also has only one Cainan in his OT chronology, although he used the LXX.[6] Eusebius of Caesarea (270-340 AD) also follows the LXX, yet omits this "Cainan." Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch (c.170 AD), who also followed the LXX in his Chronology of Genesis omits the extra Cainan.[7]

The first person to mention this Cainan as part of the Bible was Augustine (354-430 AD). Origen (185-254 AD) has Cainan in his LXX, but marks it with an obelisk as an unauthorized reading. Jerome, a contemporary of Augustine, included it in the Latin Vulgate (404 AD), which for many centuries later was the only bible in general use.

Lord Hervey adds that this Cainan was not contained in any copies of the LXX available to Berosus, Eupolemus, Polyhistor, Josephus, Philo, Theophilus of Antioch, Origen, or Eusebius. "It seems certain therefore, that his name was introduced into the genealogies of the Greek NT in order to bring them into harmony with the genealogies of Christ in St Luke's gospel where Cainan was found in the time of Jerome."[8]

Skinner says, "That this is a secondary alteration (in the LXX) is almost certain, because (a) it is wanting in 1 Ch 1:18,24 LXX; (b) Kenan already occurs in the former genealogy (5:9ff); and (c) the figures assigned to Kenan simply duplicate those of Shelach."[9]
According to Scaliger (1605), other ancient manuscripts of Luke also omitted it as well, as OT *versions* of Genesis such as the Sam., the Targums of Jonathan, the Syriac, the Arabic, etc. Therefore, the origin of the extra Cainan in Luke 3:36 seems not to be a copying error, writing the name 2ce from the real Cainan in verse 37 to verse 36 as many in the past and present have proposed, or any of the other theories mentioned, but rather a deliberate addition of this name to the genealogy from popular extra biblical literature.

Also, it has been proposed, that because millennial theory was popular in 400 AD, which only works well in the LXX with the extra Cainan, that all sides would have encouraged Jerome to include it in his Latin Version. We know Augustine tried to get him to use the entire LXX for the OT, although he refused. Therefore, it is probable that the extra Cainan was added sometime between 340 and 404 AD to most of the copies of both the LXX and Luke, possibly simultaneously by certain influential Christian leaders who both relied on the LXX and believed that the events in the book of Jubilees were historical; and once Jerome included it in his translation of Luke's account, the authoritatively sanctioned Vulgate reading became *the* reading, the inconsistency of Gen 11:12 and Luke 3:36 remaining in our versions to this day.

G.Hasel adds, "It seems reasonable to assume that this 'second' Cainan (Kenan) is a later scribal addition in the LXX. It may be occasioned by an attempt to schematize, which is characteristic of the LXX version in Gen. 5&11." The book of Jubilees, which contains this story of the second Cainan, was not translated from the Ethiopic until 1895 and papyrus 75 was not known until fairly recently.[10]

Archaeology

Ancient Egypt:

Although the history of Egypt as recorded by the priest, Manetho, goes way back, we should expect that the history of the oldest nations would properly begin with the dispersion from Babel. Egypt, which was founded by Menes (secular sources say *united by Menes),* would be dated about 2450-2600 BC by any of the timelines proposed herein. Mizraim, Ham's son, is identified by some as Menes, the first actual king of Egypt; and Mizraim certainly would have been a prominent person at the time of dispersion.

Mackey states: "If Dr. Albright was correct in his view that the Egyptian *Manium* (or *Mannu*), against whom the Akkadian potentate Naram-Sin (c. 2200 BC conventional dating) successfully waged war, was none other than the legendary first pharaoh Menes, himself, then that must lead to the shocking conclusion that the beginning of the Egyptian dynastic history (c. 3100 BC conventional dating) is a millennium out of whack with Akkadian history."[1] We know from any biblical reckoning that the conventional dating for the beginning of Egypt with king Menes (3100 BC) is off. Menes was one of Ham's sons born after the flood. He was contemporary with Nimrod. Nimrod founded Babylon and Menes founded Egypt. The start of their kingdoms would likely be the date of the Dispersion from Babel. The Greek Astronomer, Eratosthenes (c.200 BC), numbers 38 Egyptian kings from Thebes, beginning with Menes, and reigning from 2600 BC to 1524 BC.[2]

But note how well this conventionally dated war between Manium and Naram-sin fits with these timelines. Menes was born to Ham likely either in Arphaxad's generation beginning just after the flood (Arphaxad-2 years after), or the next ones, Salah and Eber, until Peleg's birth and the dispersion from Babel a century after Noah's flood. Each father to son generation then averaged 32 years. People lived an ave. of 412 years between the flood and Babel. If Menes was born to Ham 35 years after the flood, and the flood was in 2636 BC; this c. 2200 BC date could fit in Menes' lifetime.

The Merneptah Stele is another piece of evidence we have of early Israelite history. It is good evidence for Ramses II not being the Pharaoh of the Exodus. It was made at the time that Ramses' son, Merneptah, was Pharaoh (his 5th year) and lists Israel as already a settled people in Canaan.

Merneptah Stele

The Merneptah stone also is a particular example of falsely recorded history. This exquisite piece of black granite with a detailed carving of King Merneptah's (son of Ramses II) victory over Syria, Libya, and Israel is dated at about 1220 BC.[3] He records as having wiped out every last seed of Israel "Israel is laid waste; his seed is not." Not only was the Jewish nation not destroyed, but no record of this event is anywhere even mentioned in scripture. Some "point out that the Merneptah Stela's sole purpose was to aggrandize the military campaign of this king, and thus should not be considered as historically accurate." [4]

Jericho:

Archaeologists date the destruction of Jericho from 1220 to 1550 BC. This wide range is indicative more of individual predispositions to certain dates than "the concrete evidence of sherds and stones"[6]as Jesse Long stated.

Pictured (from left to right): a scarab of Hatshepsut (c. 1503-1483 BC), a scarab of Thutmose III (c. 1504-1450 BC), reverse side of a seal of Thutmose III, and scarab of Amenhotep III (c. 1386-1349 BC).

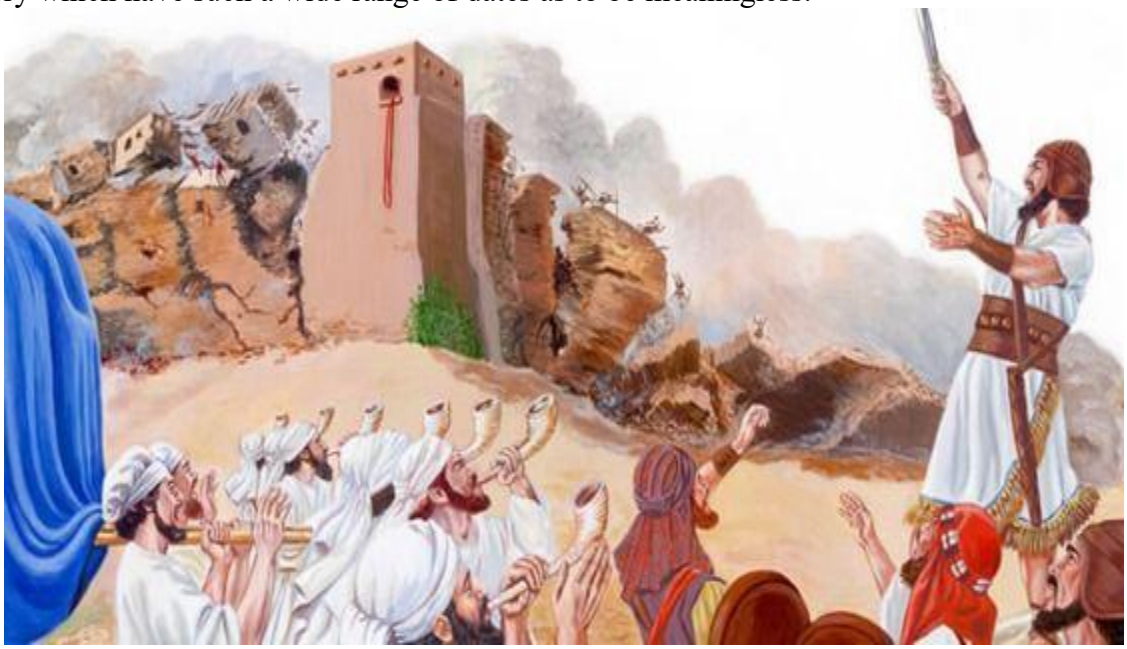
Famed Archaeologist Kathleen Kenyon, from her meticulous work at Jericho (1952-1958), has Jericho destroyed about 1550 BC, which would place the Exodus about 1590 BC. She placed the destruction level at 1550 BC, "contended that there was no fortified city in 1400 BC for Joshua's army to conquer, and that the archaeological evidence does not agree with the biblical description of a large-scale military incursion contemporary with the destruction of Jericho."[7](at 1400)

Corson adds, "Dame Kenyon found that Jericho probably enjoyed its peak in the later 17th century BC. It had its most massive walls and defenses from this time…But at the end of MB I (c.1550 BC), the walls above the embankment were wholly destroyed and all of Jericho was burned. After this, the site was abandoned until the 14th century or later."[8] Stephen Meyers states, "Recent scientific radiocarbon dating of cereal grains from Tell Es-Sultan (Jericho) place the end of the Middle Bronze Age (MB-IIC) around 1540 BC.[8a] After these walls fell, Perry adds, "The Jericho site was left bare for hundreds of years, so that there was large scale erosion."[9]

I mention Kenyon because her conclusions are based not only on the absence of a particular form of pottery (in her excavations) which was common at 1406 BC, but that there was only one *fortified* wall (c.1560 BC) found there; the earlier walls (c. 2000 BC) were mud brick construction and their destruction is attributed to likely earthquake activity. Callaway says, "The houses destroyed in about 1560 BC were not reoccupied, and no artifacts from the period after this destruction were found, except the remnant of the squatter's hut."[10]

Her critics say the absence of this particular pottery proves nothing because her excavations were from the poor side of town, and this was expensive pottery. Pretty weak argument.
The absence of this pottery in a rich city like Jericho, which should be found there, is still a good, though not conclusive, argument. Also they say she must be wrong, because they found more recent amulets found in graves north of the city. But some of those amulets are of Amenhotep III and date from 1386 to 1349 BC.[11] That doesn't work with 1406BC either, the date most bible archaeologists use for Jericho.

The problem is that the set dates only reflect the biases of the scholars involved. The bible believing archaeologist puts a date on it lining up with his view of the bible's chronology,1406 BC, relying on 1 Kings 6:1, a questionable verse. And the non-bible believer usually uses C14 or pottery which have such a wide range of dates as to be meaningless.



The Armana Letters

These are cuneiform documents found at el-Amarna. Six of these are letters from the governor of Jerusalem, Abdi-Heba, to either Pharaoh Amenhotep III (c. 1408/1390-1372/1352 BC) or his successor, Akhenaten (1352-1358 BC). They appeal to the Pharaoh for military assistance against Apiru invaders. Many think that they describe the time of the conquest under Joshua and Caleb. If so, this would be consistent with a mid 1400's Exodus and 480 years for 1 Kings 6:1.

"Lost are the lands of the king…lost are all the mayors…the Apiru has plundered all the lands of the king. If there are archers this year the lands of the king, my lord, will remain." -letter 286. "Consider Jerusalem. This, neither my father nor my mother gave to me. The strong hand, the arm of the king gave it to me. Consider the deed. This is the deed of Milkilu and the deed of the sons of Lab'ayu, who have given the land of the king to the Apiru." -letter 287.

"I am treated like an Apiru, and I do not visit the king, my lord, since I am at war. I am situated like a ship in the midst of the sea. The strong hand of the king took the land of Nahrima and the land of Kasi, but now the Apiru have taken the very cities of the king. Not a single mayor remains to the king, my lord, all are lost. Behold, Turbazu was slain in the city gate of Silu. The king did nothing. Behold, servants who were joined to the Apiru smote Zimredda of Lakisu and Yapih-Hadda was slain in the city gate of Silu…If there are no archers this year, all the lands of the king, my lord, are lost." -letter 288.[12]

Thomas comments, "Habiru (in Egyptian, Apiru), was a derogatory name given at this time to nomadic and seminomadic invaders- Semites and non-Semites- infiltrating into Palestine from the north. The OT name, Hebrew, used for the Israelites (only rarely and chiefly by foreigners), may be derived from it, but Habiru is not primarily an ethnic term, as it was used in Mesopotamia of loosely organized and unorganized immigrants for centuries before it reached Palestine and Egypt." [13]

Joshua had killed the king of Jerusalem, Adoni-zedek, in his initial 7-year conquest of the land (Josh. 10:1-26), but Jerusalem (the Jebusites) was not captured until shortly after Joshua's death. (Josh 15:63, Jud. 1:1,8). This capture would have been about 25 years into the conquest period; about 1380 BC according to the mid 1400's Exodus model. Amenhotep III would have been pharaoh in 1380 BC if the current knowledge of Egyptian chronology is valid.

Could this be evidence that Jerusalem was still in the hands of the Canaanites at this time? Jerusalem was called Jerusalem (city of Salem) from at least the 18th c. BC according to Egyptian hieroglyphics, and earlier in Abram's day, we read of Melchizadek, king of Salem (Gen.14:18).

When the Jebusites began inhabiting it, we do not know. It was known as both Jerusalem and Jebus during the Judges period (Jud.1:8,21;1 Chron 11:4) until David drove the Jebusites out: "Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass that the children of Israel asked the Lord saying, "Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?" And the Lord said, "Judah shall go up…" "Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire." Judges 1:1,8.

Another way to explain this would be to say that these letters were from the Jebusite ruler (but not "king") who still lived in Jerusalem after the initial conquest, prior to, or anytime during the judges period, which would make it more problematic dating the initial conquest by these letters, as the Jews did not drive out the Canaanites (including the Jebusites in Jerusalem), but lived among them, and only gained possession of the land over a long period of time. In fact, Jerusalem was not in their control until David took the city in the 7th year of his reign. (2 Sam. 5:5-7) Moreover, the word used here for Abdi-Heba is not the word for king, but "mayor/governor."

Merrill states, “But the conquest, contrary to traditional interpretations, was limited to population decimation and displacement, not material destruction, and therefore is discernible barely, if at all, in the archeological record. The Apiru movement of the Amarna texts may be a reflex of some of the effects of the slightly earlier conquest, but it should certainly not be construed as a Canaanite version of that conquest or of any form of Israel’s emergence… The Amarna accounts provide a non-Israelite perspective on the instability occasioned by Israel’s failure to follow through on the divine mandate to possess the land: [14]

“As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out, but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.” Josh.15:63. Judges 19:1,11: “And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel…when they were by Jebus… ‘Come I pray thee, and let us turn in into this city of the Jebusites and lodge in it’. And his master said unto him, ‘We will not turn aside hither into the city of a stranger that is not of the children of Israel; we will pass over to Gibeah.’”2 Sam. 5:6,7 says, “And the king and his men went to Jerusalem, unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land…nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion.”

Kiel states, “Joshua had already slain the king of Jerusalem and his four allies after the battle at Gibeon (Josh.10:3,18-26)0, but had not conquered Jerusalem, his capital. This was not done till after Joshua’s death, when it was taken by the tribes of Judah and Simeon. Even after this capture, and notwithstanding the fact that it had been set on fire, it did not come into the sole and permanent possession of the Israelites. After the conquerors had advanced still farther, to make war upon the Canaanites in the mountains, in the Negev, and in the Shephelah (vs.9 sqq.), the Jebusites took it again and rebuilt it, so that in the following age it was regarded by the Israelites as a foreign city (ch. 19:11-12).” [15]

There is also a list from the time of Amenhotep III in the temple of Amon in Nubia. In column 4.a2 is written, “ssw yhw3” which translates to “Yahweh of the land of the Shasu.” Shasu is a term used by the Egyptians to describe Bedouins east of the Nile Delta.[16] Gleason Archer has pointed out that one of the Armana letters from the king of Meggido speaks of a leader named "Yashuya" which is close to the spelling of Joshua.[17]

However, Stephen Meyers states, “Cities that are not mentioned in the El Amarna letters are also important to note. Bimson says: The fact that various Canaanite cities important in other periods do not feature in the Amarna correspondence is adequately accounted for by the fact that the incoming Israelites had destroyed them just a few decades before. Cities which do not feature include Gibeon, Jericho, Hebron (?), and Bethel (1981, 227).[17a]

However, it must be said that “the inherent imprecision of archaeology disqualifies it from dogmatic judgments on the historical integrity of the biblical text.”(Brantley)[18] This includes the Egyptian records of long kingdoms, based on secondhand accounts of Manetho,[19] which are more distorted the further back in time one goes, as evidenced by some unbelievably long reigns in the pre-dynastic period. Also, his lists are often taken as sequential, but Herodotus says that at one time in Egyptian history, there were no fewer than 12 kings ruling various parts of Egypt simultaneously.[20] Morris concludes, “In view of the highly equivocal and contradictory data from all extra-biblical sources, the only possibility of obtaining anything approximating an exact chronology would have to lie in the Bible itself.” [21]

Who was the Pharaoh at the Exodus?

Who was the Pharaoh at the time of Israel's exodus from Egypt? One can find more answers to this question than seemingly any other. Pharaohs spanning a thousand years of history are proposed, from 2200 BC to 1200 BC. Although there are no historical records extant except for the Bible's account, and though the bible's chronology can be added various ways, the bible does provide chronological limits, which eliminate a number of these proposed candidates, such as Rameses II, the Pharaoh usually depicted in the movies. Before we tackle the question of the Pharaoh at the exodus, let us begin with the entrance of Israel into Egypt.

AMENOTEP II

RAMSES II

THUTMOS II

THUTMOSE III

Acts 7:18 states, “Till another king arose which knew not Joseph.” It can hardly be supposed that any Egyptian king would have been ignorant of the achievements of Joseph, but a foreign king could have. According to Egyptologists, the Hyksos reigned from 1675-1552 BC +-30 years (15th and 16th Egyptian dynasties),[3] Corson says, “We know that the Hyksos built massive defensive works, all out of brick. Later Egyptian writers claim that they were rapacious and cruel…sometime in the first third of the 16th century, i.e. around 1580 BC, the Hyksos hegemony began to fail…Pharaoh Ahmose ultimately pressed them from Egypt sometime near the middle of the 16th century…The Hyksos changed from a power growing in wealth and dominion, to a faction, embattled, defensive, and in retreat. This change was quite abrupt.”[4]

Avaris was probably conquered by the 18th year of Ahmos' reign.[4a] This is suggested by "a graffito in the quarry at Tura whereby 'oxen from Canaan' were used at the opening of the quarry in Ahmose's regnal year 22." Since the cattle would probably have been imported after Ahmose's siege of the town of Sharuhen which followed the fall of Avaris, this means that the reign of Khamudi must have terminated by Year 18 or 19 of Ahmose's 25-year reign at the very latest.

After Ahmose took Avaris, the next 50 years sees an absence of a servile community of aliens in Egypt. Donald Redford states, “The 50 years following the expulsion of the Hyksos, roughly the 2nd half of the16th century BC-comprise a major period of transition in the history of Western Asia.”[5] According to the proposed timeline herein, the pharaoh of the Exodus would have been a Hyksos ruler, and after Pharaoh and his army drowning in the Red sea, we would expect the soon demise of their power in Egypt. Makrizi, a historian of Egypt, c.1400AD, said “It is a one days journey from the Sea of Kolzoum (gulf of Suez); the shore of which is there called the ‘shore of the sea of Faran.’ There it was that Pharaoh was drowned by the Almighty.”[6]

The Egyptian priest, Manetho, wrote a history of Egypt, and although no copies survive, we have extracts from Josephus, Africanus, and Eusebius. Josephus, quoting Manetho, says that after a siege of Avaris (the site later called Raamses) by Thummosis (or Tethmosis: a corrupt form of Ahmos), king of Egypt, the Hyksos peacefully left Egypt en-masse, settled in a country now called Judea, and built the city of Jerusalem “not fewer than 240,000 and took their journey from Egypt through the wilderness.”[7] Of course we know from the account of Melchizedek in Abram's day (Gen.14:18)[8], that Jerusalem, or Salem, as it was known early on, was there long before this.

Waddell adds, "In point of historical fact, the victorious king was Ahmos, and he took Avaris by main force; the genuine Manetho must surely have given this name, which is preserved by Africanus and Eusebius as also by Apion..."[9] Obviously, Josephus equates the Hyksos expulsion with the exodus of Israel**.** Perhaps **Manetho melded the two events also, thus accounting for the mass exodus from Egypt without giving glory to the despised Jews**.

Kiel states, “If we add to this the unquestionably legendary character of the Manetho accounts, there is always the greatest probability in the views of those inquirers who regard the two accounts given by Manetho, concerning the Hyksos, as two different forms of one and the same legend, and the historical fact upon which this legend was founded as being the 430 years sojourn of the Israelites, which had been thoroughly distorted in the national interests of Egypt…

'There arose a new king over Egypt who knew not Joseph.'…A new king…is a king who follows different principles of government from his predecessors….That this king belonged to a new dynasty, as the majority of commentators follow Josephus in assuming, cannot be inferred with certainty from the predicate *new*; but it is very probable, as furnishing the readiest explanation of the change in the principles of government."[10] Brown agrees, 'a king of a different sort' pointing to another dynasty."[10a]

The king who didn't know Joseph was "the same" king ruling when Moses was born according to Acts 7:18-20: "Till another king arose who knew not Joseph. The same dealt subtly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end that they might not live. In which time, Moses was born…" The exodus occurred 80 years after Moses' birth and their demise would be expected shortly after the exodus; thus, this dynasty was likely about a century, matching only one in Egyptian history: that of the Hyksos.

Time goes by, and as Ex.1:7-8 states, "and the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly and multiplied and waxed exceeding mighty, and the land was filled with them. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt who knew not Joseph."

Joseph would have been legendary among the Egyptians, and any Egyptian prince would have been taught this from childhood, but the later Hyksos pharaohs would not have known of him. This verse may imply that the oppression was limited to the time of the Hyksos, who ruled a little over a century until Ahmos expelled them from Egypt, beginning what is now called the New Kingdom. If so, their rule would have been very close to an end with Pharaoh and his army destroyed and their main workforce exiting from Egypt. Give Ahmos 4 months to attack plus the estimated 20 months they were besieged before leaving, would make their exodus 2 years after the Israelite exodus..

Many studying this subject miss the forest for the trees. Courville states, "The real problem here is not whether the Egyptians recorded the incident or whether or not such inscriptions have been found. The real question is whether the Exodus as recorded in scripture could have occurred without leaving an unmistakable crises in Egypt which could not under any circumstances be concealed from future generations."[11]

Ricardo states, "Moreover, the types of royal inscriptions found on stelae and temples never include any negative reports about Pharaoh and his armies. Rather, they speak of his triumphs and deeds of valor, and even distort set-backs such as the near disaster to Ramesses II's army at the battle of Kadesh, about which we know from other sources. Consequently, no one will ever find a stela commemorating the humiliation of Pharaoh as a result of the plagues or the defeat of the Egyptian forces dispatched to bring the fleeing Hebrews back to Egypt."

Vandeer adds, "If the number of immigrants were nearly 2,000,000 which is a legitimate deduction from Ex.12:37, the movement was one which would have shaken Egypt to its very foundation, and which, even if it had failed to be recorded in one of the numerous monuments which have survived in Egypt would at any rate have left some unmistakable impression on Egyptian history."[12]

Isaiah 52:4 states, "My people went down aforetime to Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause." If this is speaking of the same event, this "Assyrian" may refer to the Hyksos.[13] (If the recent oppression, this would be Sennacherib). "Assyrian lists of kings record the name Hayanu for a "remote ancestor" of Shamshi-Adad I (c.1800 BC) of Assyria, Khayan being a Hyksos King."

Josephus, in about 100 AD, says that the Pharaoh who drove the Hyksos out of Egypt was called Tethmosis, and adds that "Lysimachus says it was under king Bocchoris, that is, 1700 years ago"[14] (c. 1600 BC). The early Christian historian Julius Africanus (c.220 AD) says that Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt "in the days of" a Theban king, "Ahmos". [15](18th dynasty, c. 1570-1546 BC).

Some say that Pharaoh watched from the shore, and was not destroyed with his armies as they drove though the dry sea bed, but numerous inscriptions tell us that the Pharaohs *led* their troops into battle, and the bible's account confirms this. The Pharaoh of the Exodus drowned in the Red Sea : "For the horse[15a] of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea…and the waters covered their enemies; there was not one of them left." (Ex. 15:19, Ps. 106:11). Ps. 136:15 states, "But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea," Ex.14:18 states, "And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD when I have gotten Me honor *upon Pharaoh*, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen." If God wanted us to understand that Pharaoh did not die in the Red Sea, He surely could have communicated that. Keil, commenting on Ex.15:19 states: "In the words, "*Pharaoh's horse, with his chariots and horsemen,*" Pharaoh, riding upon his horse as the leader of the army, is placed at the head of the enemies destroyed by Jehovah."[15b]

We have all the mummies of the Pharaohs from the time periods usually associated with the Exodus, so we should be looking elsewhere in time for this Pharaoh. We have the mummified bodies (even their faces are discernable) of these Pharaohs. Thutmose II & III, Amenhotep II, and Ramses II for all to see. We also have Ahmos' body found at Deir el Bahri, in 1881. The Theban king Kamos is said to have begun fighting the Hyksos in the late 1570's. Ahmos, his brother, is said to have been the king who finally expelled the Hyksos out of Egypt, after a lengthy siege of Avaris, in about 1567 BC. Joshua Mark of the World History Encyclopedia has 1570BC, but this date is variously stated.[16] Thus the exodus probably occurred about 2 years(?) prior to this, for an exodus date of c.1570 BC.

A tomb inscription by one of King Ahmos' soldiers, Ahmos, son of Ibana, states: "Then Avaris was despoiled, and I brought spoil from there; one man, three women; total, four persons. His majesty gave them to me as slaves. Then Shurahen was besieged for three years. His majesty despoiled it." He also says he beseiged Avaris, fought 3 battles there, and conquered it in the last battle. [16a]

Shurahen (Josh.19:6) is thought to be in the area of Gaza 20 miles from the NE border of Egypt, where the Hyksos in Avaris fled to.[17] So if this is just after the exodus of Israel from Egypt, that means some of the former Egyptians (Hyksos) who had Hebrew slaves in Egypt became themselves slaves of commanders in Egypt.

As to the time of the Exodus from scripture, one suggested chronology, with 580 years Exodus to the temple would place the Exodus at 1547 BC. Most commentators would say 1447 based solely on 1 Kings 6:1, which has 480 years between the exodus and the temple. "480" is the number in the Mass. text and "440" in the LXX. 1Kings 6:1 is the only area or verse in our bibles which supports 480 years for this period; the evidence from the books of Judges and Acts suggesting another century or so.

Tomb Inscription of Ahmos of Ibana

Those who rely on 1Kings 6:1 usually suggest the judges rules were not serial, but concurrent in various parts of the country. The problem with this theory is that a serial count is what the scriptures in Judges plainly import, not to mention the unwarranted reading into the text necessary in Acts 13:20 to accommodate this. (see chapters:Judges & 1 Kings 6:1).

So, if our copies of 1 Kings 6:1 are in error, how did 1 Kings 6:1 read originally?
As single digit numerical copy errors are common in the OT, at an early time when letters were substituted for numbers (see Maccabean coins 165 BC), the number originally could have been 580. For example, Stuart's Hebrew Grammar states, "Several letters… bear a great resemblance to each other…. The reader will observe that, if the left hand perpendicular of "he" be accidentally omitted or blurred, we have "daleth"left, thus ה ד ." [18] (Daleth (dalet) is the fourth letter (4), he (hay) the fifth letter (5) of the Hebrew alphabet).

As 580 fits better with the times of the judges and a smudged 5 looks like a 4, we would be looking for a pharaoh who reigned until about 1546 BC. Both Montgomery and Corson have made a case for the Exodus about this time.[18a]

1 Kings 6:1 also has been suggested to be a late interpolation. Rawlinson states, "It is not the **manner** of Old Testament writers thus to date events from an era, an idea which appears to have first occurred to the Greeks **temp.** Thucydides (writing in 411BC). It is admitted that we have no other instance in the Old Testament where this is done." [19]

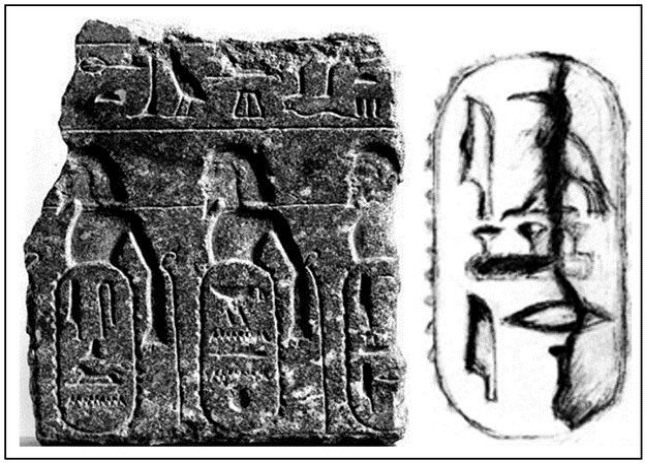
Conversely, those who believe in a 15th century or later Exodus commonly make the Pharaoh either Thutmose II or III, Amenhotep II, or Ramses II, but they are well known, and it is certain that no nation shaking event like the loss of their entire slave work force numbering 600,000 men and their families, their entire army drowning, their gold given away, their cattle dead, and crops wiped out, ever happened in their reigns (Ex.9:6-10:5). They could not have drowned in the Red Sea; they were mummified and their remains are still with us for all to see. (And of course, they didn't drown in any "reed sea.")

Exo 14:30 states: "Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore." Some might say that some of the Egyptians in Avaris could have traveled to the Red Sea and found Pharaoh's body by the seashore, brought it back and had it mummified. However, these people had just gone through 10 plagues, lost their firstborn, and gave away their valuables all because of the refusal of the Pharaoh to let the Israelites go.

Besides this, their army was dead, horses and chariots gone, and their enemies probably preparing to invade, seeing their weakness. I don't see anyone trekking across the wilderness for even one day looking for Pharaoh's body on the seashore.

Another issue is: Where did Pharaoh reside? Courville says, "According to Scripture, the Pharaoh of the Exodus had his palace in the Delta region, not far removed from the laboring Israelites. This situation had existed from the time of Moses' birth as evidenced by the finding of the child Moses in the bulrushes by the king's daughter. Thutmose III and his successors all had their capitals, and of necessity their palaces, far to the south of the Delta at Thebes...While Thutmose III did extensive building, this construction was not in brick as stated of the building by the Israelites under slavery.

The use of brick had long since been replaced by stone from quarries along the Nile river. Nor was his building program in the Eastern delta region where the cities of Pi-Thom and Pi Rameses have been located. It is certain that neither Thutmose III nor Amenhotep II nor any of the kings of Dynasty XVIII had anything to do with the construction of these cities."[20] Ken Doig adds: "With the revival of building after the Hyksos era, stone replaced brick almost entirely. The notable exception was in the building program of Ramses II."[21]



Berlin Pedestal

Another early piece of evidence that Israel was settled in the land early is the Berlin Pedestal. ABR states, “The Berlin Pedestal is an Egyptian inscription housed in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin that almost certainly refers to Israel as a nation in Canaan. The inscription has three name rings, two of which clearly read “Ashkelon” and “Canaan,” and the third of which has been reconstructed to read “Ishrael.”

In a recent reexamination of the inscription, Peter van der Veen, Christoffer Theis, and Manfred Gorg noted that the names “Ashkelon” and “Canaan” largely were written consonantally and better reflect examples from the reigns of Tuthmosis III and Amenhotep II (15th century BC) than those from the times of Rameses II and Merneptah (13th century BC). If they were already settled in Canaan in the reigns of these kings, we should be looking for an earlier 16th c.BC Pharaoh.[21a]

This also touches on a bible difficulty, which should be mentioned. Those who disregard the chronological data of scripture usually argue for a much later Exodus during the reign of Ramses II (Mid 1200’s BC). One of the major scriptural arguments they use is based on the use of the name, “Raamses" (also spelled, "Rameses," "Ramsees," and "Ramses"), for one of the treasure cities the Israelites built while slaves in Egypt, and also the “land of Rameses” (in Goshen) where Israel settled (Gen. 47:4,11).

But this Ramses II argument is groundless; as Corson says, “Ramses II built throughout the delta, refurbishing many cities that already had ancient histories. One may have already borne the name of Ramses, as did a district in the Delta, but even if he was the first to so name the city, the Hebrews could have built it 500 years earlier.”[22]

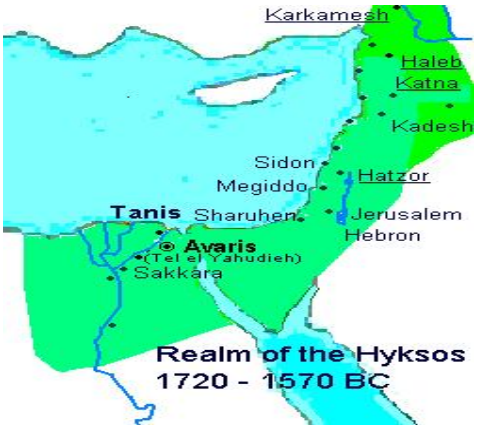
Gill adds "the names are differently pointed and pronounced; that built by the Israelites is Raamses, and was one of the treasure cities of Pharaoh, and never inhabited by the Israelites."[23] The city of Raamses was in the area that was once the late capital of the Hyksos, Avaris (Their early capital was Tanis).

Who Was The Pharaoh at the Exodus?

Avaris was possibly renamed in honor of Ramses I, who is thought to have been born in Avaris. Charles Aling says of the city of Raamses, "In dynasty 18, ca 1570-1325 BC, little or no major work went on there. It seems certain that the Hebrews worked at Raamses during the Hyksos period." [24]

Rohl adds, "Pi-Ramsesse was itself founded in the early 17th dynasty, but texts from that dynasty refer to the South quarter of the Ramesside city as Avaris, confirming that the much older SIP city was later incorporated into the new city of Ramesses."[25] Also, the discovery of the Merneptah Stele should put the Ramses II theory to rest. It contains hieroglyphic text, dated about 1230 BC, which describes the victories of Pharaoh Merneptah (who reigned just after Ramses II in that century), and has the Israelites as a people already settled in Canaan then.[26]

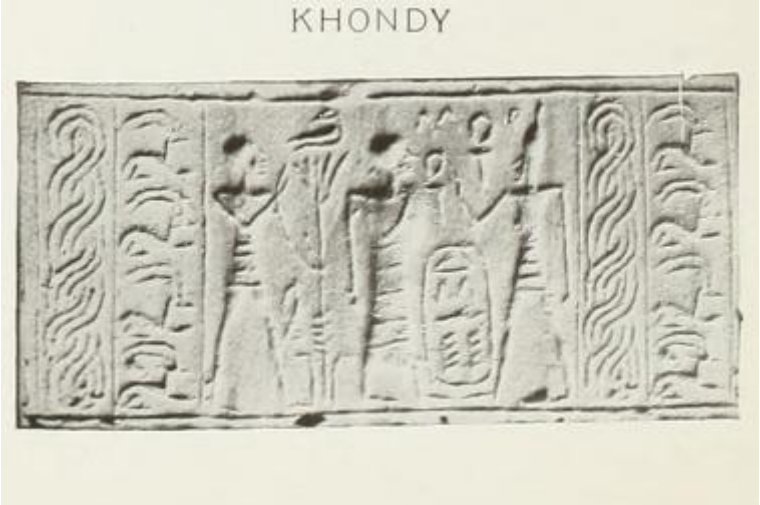
Further, there were other Pharaohs with the name "Raamses" (note variety of spellings). Ussher, citing Manetho (1:103), has 2 other Pharaohs named Ramsees *in his chronology*, one reigning 1 year in 1578 BC and another "Ramsees Miamun" reigning 1577-1511.[27] Wolf comments, "Whereas it is true that Rameses II was a prodigious builder, it is not at all certain that the city mentioned in Ex.1:11 bore his name at first. In ch.1 and 2, it appears that Moses had not been born until after Rameses was built, and yet he was 80 years old at the time of the Exodus. The same problem exists with the appearance of "Rameses" in Gen. 47:11 hundreds of years before the reign of Rameses II. Apparently in both cases, earlier names were updated by a later editor who used the more recent name.



Such a proleptic use also appears in Gen.14:14 where Abraham pursued the captors of Lot as far as Dan. But the name of the city was "Lasish" until the tribe of Dan captured and renamed it in the days of the judges (Jud.18:29)."[28] As Judges 18 says, "And they called the name of the city 'Dan' ...howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first."

Bryant Wood states, “When the Hyksos later established their capital there, they retained the name Avaris. It was probably the Hyksos rulers who forced the Israelites to build the store cities of Pithom (= Tell el-Maskhuta) and Rameses (= Tell el-Daba = Avaris) (Ex 1:11).[2] When Rameses II rebuilt the city in the 13th century in the post-Hyksos period, and long after the Israelites had left Egypt, the name was changed to Rameses.’[28a]

Archer adds, “It is quite obvious that the Pharaoh from whom Moses had to flee after his slaying of the Egyptian taskmaster, remained on the throne until near the close of Moses’ forty year sojourn in Midian; for Exodus 4:19 reports Yahweh as saying to Moses, “Go return to Egypt; for all the men are dead which sought your life.”’[29] **Therefore, the Pharaoh of the Exodus would likely have been an immediate successor to a Pharaoh with a 40 plus year reign, but with a very short reign himself** (and possibly without an heir as his firstborn was dead).



Cylinder seal of Khamudi

As for the last 3 kings at this time, one timeline has the Hyksos king Apophis 43 yrs followed by Khamudi 10 years ending at the fall of Avaris. Vilis has Ahmose (ruling first over just southern Egypt), the Theban Egyptian king, c.1577-1552; who in c.1559 destroys Avaris and drives the Hyksos out, unifying Egypt and starting a whole new dynasty.[30]

Ryholt though has proposed that Khamudi's reign must have been short, amounting to no more than a year. He also adds, "Ahmose would have conquered Avaris by the 18th or 19th year of his reign at the very latest. This is suggested by "a graffito in the quarry at Tura whereby 'oxen from Canaan' were used at the opening of the quarry in Ahmose's regnal year 22. Since the cattle would probably have been imported after Ahmose's siege of the town of Sharuhen which followed the fall of Avaris, this means that the reign of Khamudi must have terminated by Year 18 or 19 of Ahmose's 25 year reign at the very latest."[31] If this short reign be true, the Pharaoh of the Exodus was likely Khamudi.

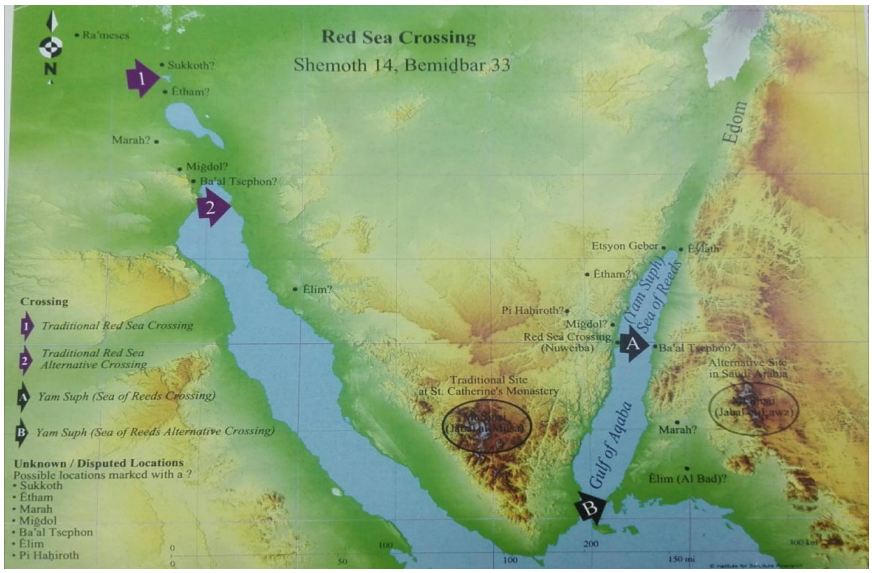
The problem with dating ancient Egypt is one we need to address. The eminent Egyptologist, James Breasted, has Ahmos' reign beginning in 1580 BC.[32a] Modern scholars are divided, with the early ones at 1570 BC. Larsson proposes pushing back the dates some because of New Moon dates. He states, "Using modern astronomical parameters and based on handed down dates for "days of the feast of the new moon," we propose the exact accession of years for two Egyptian new kingdom pharaohs: 1497 for Thutmose iii and 1297 for Rameses II."[33]

This would push conventional dating (from 1570) back 18 years. Ahmos is thought to have entered Avaris in his 18th year, though the Rhind mathematical Papyrus states: 'reignal year 11…the southern prince broke into Tjaru.'[34] However, It is debated whether this refers to Ahmos, or rather, Khamudi, based on the phrase "the southern prince." However, how one could call Khamudi a southern prince, when he reigned in the north, is incomprehensible. Ahmos was the Southern Prince. *Ryholt translates this: "He-of-the-South* (i.e. Ahmose) strikes against Sile.'[35]

If we go with Ahmos' accession in 1570,[36] and his 11th year at the fall of Avaris; this puts Avaris at 1559 BC and the Exodus in c.1561BC. If one places Ahmos on the throne in 1580BC, this would be 1569 BC for the fall. But if we move Ahmos back 18 years, this places the conquest of Avaris at 1577 BC. Although the length of the seige of Avaris is unknown, he seems,from the account of Ahmos of Ibana, to have taken about 2 years to conquer Avaris. This probably means the Exodus probably occurred 2 years earlier.

Red Sea Crossing

As for where they crossed the sea, it has been proposed that Israel did not cross the Red Sea, but a marshy area north of it. This is because in the Hebrew OT, the term for this body of water was 'yom suph' which many say means "reed sea." This is because they say Moses used 'suph'; an Egyptian word for reed. Others say it means 'end sea', which is the Hebrew 'suph' meaning end. The LXX puts "red sea" in the text in place of 'yum suph', and the Red Sea is what scripture intends to convey to us, as the New Testament writers Stephen and the writer of Hebrews tell us (Acts 7:36, Heb.11:29).



D.Schwartz comments:

"Secondly, since NT authors in Acts 7:36 and Hebrews 11:29 are using LXX terminology ("**Red Sea**"), and fail to use the MT (Hebrew) terminology ("**Sea** of Reeds"), and their writings are under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it appears that God is affirming the choice of terminology. Indeed, it is presumptuous to call what God has affirmed "erroneous."

In saying this, however, it does not follow that the Holy Spirit inspired the LXX, but only those texts placed into the NT under the Spirit's direction. This issue is critical and central! Indeed, those who become so immersed in the minutiae of the language issues can sometimes overlook the larger and essential issues of the theological spectrum.

If the Holy Spirit inspired the NT, then the words He chose (from any source) are exactly what He wanted included in the text. And He chose words, many of them, from the text of the LXX."[1]

In many OT references, it is obvious the term "Red Sea" is referring to the Sea of Aqaba, and no other body of water. **Ex. 23:31** states, "And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river." See also Numbers 21:4, Judges 11:16-22, and Jer.49:20-1. I Kings also tells us that Edom bordered 'Yom suph.' Edom borders the gulf of Aqaba, and the sea of the Philistines is the Mediterranean.

1Ki 9:26 says, "And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which *is* beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom." However, historians tell us that both gulfs are referred to in ancient times as the red sea. So the key question is: "Does the red sea in the exodus crossing account have to be the same gulf as the red sea in other bible references? If it does, the gulf of Aqaba is the only other possibility.

It is true that many modern experts support the theory of a crossing in the lower region of the Bitter Lakes, which starts about 25 km north of Suez. This concept, however, is accompanied by a denial of the miraculous nature of the crossing (holding that the crossing was only through a pond or swamp) or by the idea that the northern end of the Red Sea formerly reached the region of the Bitter Lakes and that the the waters there were much deeper at that time; although archaeological evidence indicates that there has been very little change in the water level there since ancient times (since 1869, the Suez canal runs through there).

For this reason, the location suggested by older experts (from the last century) still seems to be the one that best fits the requirements of biblical history. Pi-Hairoth is evidently a site on the narrow plain that runs along the southeastern foothills of Jebel… The sea bed in this region declines very gradually on both sides due to sandbars that extend for 3 km on either side. The maximum water depth near the middle of this trajectory is about 15 m.(50') The distance from one bank to the other is about 10 km.[1a]

After crossing the Red Sea, Israel came to the wilderness of Shur, and 3 days later camped at Marah and Elim. Ex.15:22-27. John Gill says "according to Aben Ezra, they stayed but one day at Marah. Elim, as a late traveller (r) says, was upon the northern skirts of the desert of Sin"[2]

The traditional Christian Orthodox identification of Mount Sinai as Jabal Musa - one of the peaks at the southern tip of the Sinai peninsula, would imply that the *wilderness of Sin* was probably the narrow plain of el-Markha, which stretches along the eastern shore of the Red Sea for several miles toward the promontory of Ras Mohammed.[3]

Sarah Ryan states: "…site (1) places the crossing at a little, shallow, swamp like body of water, right outside of the ancient Egypt boundaries. Given the size of this body of water, the close location to the Egyptian border, the lack of any archeological evidence, and the fact that this is not part of the Red Sea; it is easy to dismiss this as a possibility.[4] In fact, the only reason it is proposed is because crossing the depth of water in the gulf of Aqaba requires a spectacular miracle. (2800' in middle at Neweiba).

Skeptics point to the wind holding the walls of water up, but no wind could hold up any walls of water on either side. Exo 14:22 states, "And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground:* and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left." God used a "wind" to do something a natural wind cannot do. As Jason Derouchie says, "This isn't about wind getting glory; this is about God getting glory."[5]

The next possible location (2) is located on the Red Sea near the tip of the Gulf of Suez, about 20 miles from Rameses, and so a shorter distance, or further down the gulf by the mountains. A three day journey with 3 stops and 2M people would fit here.

A key question here is :How long did it take them to reach the red sea?

Exodus 15:22-3 states, "So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah." This was just after they crossed the Red Sea. Barnes comments on this: "three days - The distance between Ayoun Musa and Huwara, the first spot where any water is found on the route, is 33 geographical miles. The whole district is a tract of sand, or rough gravel."[6]

So they traveled 11 mi./day after crossing the red sea; and as they needed to make haste to find water, this was probably at the same speed as before. Even doubling this speed would not get them even near the gulf of Aqaba before Pharaoh would have caught up with them.

Normal travel time in the wilderness is much less though. Bryant Wood says that pastoralists traveling with their flocks can go no more than 10 km (6 mi) per day.[6a]

In Ex. 8:27 Moses tells Pharaoh that Israel will "go three days journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as He shall command us.' And Pharaoh said, 'I will let you go that you may sacrifice to the lord your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away.'" Note that they stopped 3 times: at Succoth, Etham, and Migdol by the Sea. Many commentators take the three stops to refer to three days of travel.

Note how soon the king decides to pursue them. Ex.14:5-6- "And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us? And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him." This sounds like he gave them 3 days, but expected them to return immediately(Ex.14: 5-6). It does not sound like they got very far. Surely, Pharaoh would not have waited long to exact revenge after his son's death.

One proposed route to the Red Sea, Goshen to Newiba, is 209 miles; but at 11mile/day, this would have taken 19 days: too long for this rendering of the account to be likely (or even longer 250m. to straits of Tiran). Others say they traveled constantly with no rest, even miraculously fast, because of God's Pillar cloud and pillar of fire leading both by day and night. But nowhere does the text intimate this meant no rest, or that all the people received supernatural endurance. In fact, scripture tells us that they stopped 3 times.

Gill comments, "Jarchi…says, they went out with them the three days' journey, but the Israelites not returning to Egypt (as expected), they tell Pharaoh of it the fourth day… these reported to Pharaoh:**that the people fled**; that under a pretence of going three days' journey into the wilderness, to serve and sacrifice to the Lord, they were about to make their escape out of the land"[7] Hebrew tradition says the entire time from leaving Egypt to completely crossing the sea took 7 days. Josephus says, "on the 3rd day they came to a place called Beelzeophon on the Red Sea." (Ant.2.15.1) Ex.13:20 tells us they went from Succoth to Etham to Pihahiroth, where they crossed the sea.

Corson says, “Our search for the place of the passage should look, then, for some shore-point 3-7 days from Goshen. This eliminates such extreme positions as the Gulf of Aqaba (far side of the Sinai). The passage is also completed in a single night; so we are limited to a narrow neck of sea.”[7a]

Creation Ministries adds: “All we know for certain is the starting point. Yet, we know they had doubled back (Exodus 14:2) and become trapped between Pharaoh’s army and the sea.
After marching for two days, the Israelites could have made it to the tip of the Gulf of Suez. This would also have given enough time for dispatch riders to reach Pharaoh and for him to chase down the Israelites camped on the shore. Among the Red Sea/Reed Sea/Yam Suph crossing options, Suez is the shallowest about 10 m (33 ft) at Adabiya, with a gentle slope.

In fact, the *entire* Gulf of Suez is shallower than the shallowest possible crossing point in the Gulf of Aqaba. Adabiya would be easy to get to from Rameses, and if they went around the western side, they would be “hemmed in” by a mountain to the south.

The crossing is only about 9 km (< 6 miles), but there is some contention about what the Egyptians called the land on the other side. Some claim they would still be in “Egypt” if they crossed at Adabiya. Others point out that the forts just east of the delta are the border of Egypt, which is why they had forts there, and the Sinai Peninsula was designated as ‘foreign land,’even though they had mining operations there.

If this is the case, the entire Sinai Peninsula was not considered part of Egypt. The sea bed in this region declines very gradually on both sides due to sandbars that extend for 3 km on either side. The maximum water depth near the middle of this trajectory(East of Al Adabiya) is about 15 m.(50’). [8]

What are the boundaries of the Red Sea? Struse says: "Both gulfs and the main sea were known from antiquity as the red sea.

Identifying Elim's 12 springs/fountains with Ayun Musa's 12 artesian springs, the Red Sea has to be the Gulf of Suez, this also fits the statement that the locusts IN ALL OF EGYPT were dumped into the Red Sea by a west wind, as Egypt extends from the Delta to Syene (present day Aswan) and the Gulf of Suez parallels most of Egypt's east side. Finally, after camping at Kadesh-Barnea in the Negev, Israel camps at Ezion-Geber, a port on the Red Sea in Solomon's time, making it Red Sea number Three."[9]

Bonell states, "However, it seems like Moses brought the children of Israel into the Wilderness of Shur AFTER they crossed the Red Sea. Shur seems to be located west of Kadesh-Barnea toward Egypt. (Ge 16:7; Ge 20:1; Ge 25:18; Ex 15:22; 1Sa 15:7; 1Sa 27:8). Maybe they crossed the Gulf of Suez or thereabouts, and then went by land into Midian where Mt. Sinai is located in Arabia."[9]

As for the evidence for the gulf of Aqaba, in Exodus 13:18, we are told that the LORD led Israel around by the "wilderness of the Red Sea." This "wilderness" would have been what is today known as the Sinai Peninsula, which bounds the gulf of Aqaba. However, as stated, the question is whether they were here before of after the crossing.

There are two different possible crossing locations on the Gulf of Aqaba (A and B). Site A is located about half way down the gulf at Nuweiba Beach. Nuweiba is short for "Nuwayba'al al Muzayyimah" meaning "waters of Moses!"[10] Site B is located at the bottom tip of the Gulf. Either of these two locations would put Mt. Sinai in Saudi Arabia (ancient Midian), which agrees with Galatians 4:25, and many archeological discoveries.[11]

If you visit Nuweiba Beach you will see that both ends are bordered by steep cliffs with really nowhere to go. Pharaoh would have said, **"They are entangled in the land; the wilderness has shut them in"** (Ex. 14:3).

Josephus said, “Now when the Egyptians had overtaken the Hebrews, they also seized the passages by which they imagined the Hebrews might fly, shutting them up between inaccessible precipices and the sea. For there was on each side a ridge of mountains which terminated at the sea which were impassible by reason of their roughness and obstructed their flight.”[12]

Throughout the Gulf of Aqaba, the depth is about 5,000 feet, except at these locations. At Nuweiba Beach, there is a 10-mile-long and a ¼ to ½ mile wide sand plateau which joins the two countries together. This sand bridge has a fairly level 7^0 slope on the west side, a sharp incline on the right, and has a depth of 2600+ feet (half mile) in the middle. Site B is the straits of Tiran. It has 4 reefs between the shores and is 19km across with a maximum depth of about 205m, but very rough bottom, and too steep, a 40^0 slope, on the Egyptian side.

Bryant Wood says, ”Strabo, writing his *Geography* at the beginning of the first century AD, said, “There is another canal which empties into the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf near the city Arsinoe, a city which some call Cleopatris [modern day Suez City GF]. It flows through the Bitter Lakes, as they are called” (17.25; *LCL* 8:77). Strabo makes a distinction between the Red Sea, also called the Arabian Gulf, and the Bitter Lakes. The Bitter Lakes are never called the Red Sea.

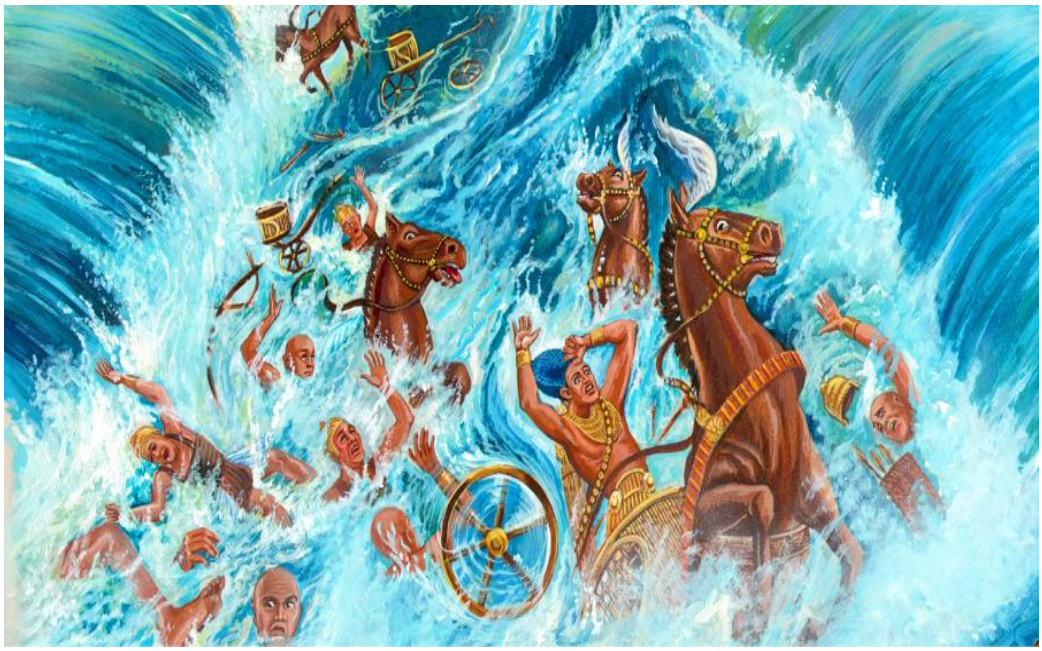
In the Hebrew Scriptures, the *Yam Suph* could refer to either the Gulf of Suez or the Gulf of Akaba/Eilat. The context determines the location. For example, Exodus 10:19 says,

“And the LORD turned a very strong west wind, which took the locusts away and blew them into the Red Sea. There remained not one locust in all the territory of Egypt” (NKJV). As J. Rea points out, the “strong west wind” should be translated “sea wind.”

In Egypt, the sea winds are from north-northwest to the south (1975: 1:572). Since the locusts covered "the face of the whole earth [land of Egypt]" (10:15; NKJV), there would need to be a large body of water to destroy the locusts. The Gulf of Suez is what is in view. Exodus 13:18, 15:4, and 15:22, and Numbers 33:10 refer to the Gulf of Suez. This location is also where the early Christian pilgrims place the Red Sea crossing (Wilkinson 1981: 100, 101, 205–207)

On the other hand, 1 Kings 9:26 says, "King Solomon also built a fleet of ships at Ezion Geber, which is near Elath on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom" (NKJV). This is clearly referring to the Gulf of Akaba/Eilat. Judges 11:16 and Jeremiah 49:20 and 49:21 are most likely referring to this gulf as well. ..[13]

As for the miraculous crossing, Exodus 15 says, " Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone… And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, *and* the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea… Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters."



Kiel notes, '*And by the breath of Thy nostrils'* (i.e., the strong east wind sent by God, which is described as the blast of the breath of His nostrils; cf. Psa_18:16) *the waters heaped themselves up* (piled themselves up, so that it was possible to go between them like walls); *the flowing ones stood like a heap*" (נֵד *cumulus*; it occurs in Jos_3:13, Jos_3:16, and Psa_33:7; Psa_78:13, where it is borrowed from this passage. מֹזְלִים: the running, flowing ones; a poetic epithet applied to waves, rivers, or brooks, Psa_78:16, Psa_78:44; Isa_44:3). "*The waves congealed in the heart of the sea:*" a poetical description of the piling up of the waves like solid masses." [13]

The Mountain of God

Exo 3:1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, *even* to Horeb.

Exo 17:1 And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and *there was* no water for the people to drink.

Exo 17:6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Exo 17:7 And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?

Exo 17:8 Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

Exo 18:5 And Jethro, Moses' father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God:

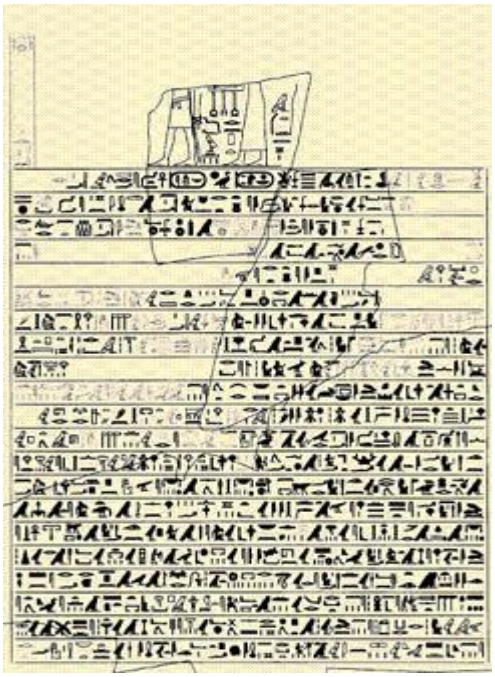
Exo 19:1 In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they *into* the wilderness of Sinai.

Exo 19:2 For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come *to* the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount.

Gill states, "**and there Israel encamped before the mount**; Mount Sinai, from whence the desert or wilderness was called. This, as Jarchi says, was on the east side of the mount; Horeb and Sinai were but one and the same mountain, which had two tops. Horeb was on the western side, near to which lay the plain of Rephidim; and Sinai was on the eastern side, on which the wilderness of that name bordered: so that the children of Israel, when they came from Rephidim, came from the western side, and took a circuit about and came to the eastern; which, according to a fore mentioned writer, was eight miles.

The Tempest Stele, Ahmos, and Mt Thera

The Tempest stele details a catastrophe during the reign of king Ahmos. It is also written first person as though Ahmos witnessed this unusual storm, though all we have are broken pieces from the temple of Karnak. Did Ahmos witness this storm from Thebes? Did this cause the plague of darkness (Ex.10:22) or hail? Was this storm the Eruption of Mt. Thera?



Tempest Stele

The eruption of Mt Thera has been said to have been 4-5 times more powerful than Krakatoa, which had worldwide effects for years. This was 540 miles away and occurred when Israel was in Egypt. Some scientists believe this event brought about one or two of the plagues, the year Israel left Egypt; so dating Thera might date the Exodus.

However, the dates have a wide range (1645-1500 BC, according to historians and archaeologists). Still, if this range holds up[1] and Thera did cause some of the plagues, that rules out the kings most proposed for the Exodus (New Kingdom kings in the 1400's BC).

It also rules in Africanus' statement of a king "in the days of Ahmos" possibly being the king at the time of the Exodus. As for the date of Thera, if this is one of the plagues, it would have been just before he besieged Avaris, which conquered in his 11th year. The date of the start of his 25-year reign is debated, with radiocarbon dates (in 2010) in the 1570-1545 BC. range).[2] It has been proposed that New Kingdom dates be pushed back because of New Moon dating of Thutmose 3. Larsen states, “Using modern astronomical parameters and based on handed-down dates for "days of the Feast of the New Moon", we propose the exact accession years for two Egyptian New Kingdom pharaohs: -1497 for Thutmose III, and -1297 for Rameses II.”

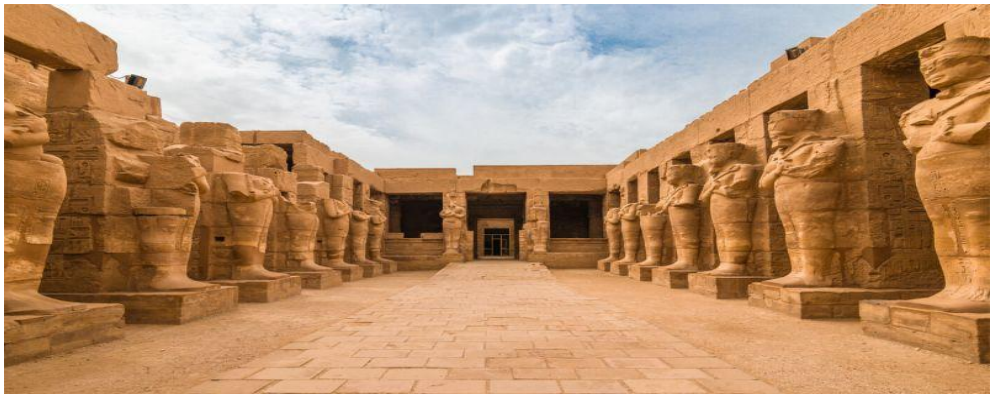
This date for Thutmose 3 is18 years earlier; so pushing Ahmos back an equal amount would move his 1550 ascension at age of 10 to 1568BC and the possible exodus date to 1559BC (2 years before the fall of Avaris, just prior to being besieged).[3]

The stele reads: “the gods [caused] that the sky come in a tempest of r[ain], with [dark]ness in the condition of the West, and the sky being in storm without [cessation, louder than] the cries of the masses,(8) more powerful [than ...], [while the rain howled] on the mountains louder than the sound of the underground source of the Nile that is in
Elephantine. Then every house, every quarter that they (the storm and rain) reached [... their corpses(?)] floating on the water like skiffs of papyrus outside the palace audience chamber for a period up to [...] days [...] while no torch could be lit in the Two Lands.

Then His Majesty was informed (15) that the mortuary concessions had been entered: the tomb chambers collapsed, the funerary mansions undermined, and the pyramids fallen – what had been made non-(16) existent (lit. “what had not been made”).

Then His Majesty commanded to restore the temples that had fallen into ruin in this entire land: to refurbish the monuments of the gods, to erect (17) their enclosure walls, to provide the sacred objects in the noble chamber, to mask the secret places, to introduce into their shrines the cult images which were(18) cast to the ground.” (Nadine Moeller tr.)

Moeller adds, "In view of the unusually detailed description of a major climatic event on the Tempest Stela, combined with the shifting chronology, we must now consider the possibility that the Thera eruption had been witnessed by Ahmose himself. Furthermore, the eruption certainly affected a large part of the eastern Mediterranean and would have remained part of an oral tradition that was fresh in the memory of the people for a long time afterwards. But the stela emphasizes the fact that Ahmose himself witnessed the event, which seems to exclude him using a second-hand account. [4] Wikipedia remarks, "Archaeological discoveries in 2006 by a team of international scientists revealed that the Santorini event was much more massive than previously thought; ...Such an event would have been noticed as far as Egypt, as a period of darkness."[4a]



Karnak

Hughes adds, "From the amount of sea floor sediments found 30km surrounding Thera, the eruption has estimated to have produced at least 60 cu.km of ash, in contrast to the Mt St Helens eruption of 1980 which produced 1/2 cu.km of ash. The eruption therefore is thought to have been 120 times larger than St Helens."[4b]

It has also been noted that the events of the plagues which befell Northern Egypt should have been recorded somewhere by someone. Yet, none exist, unless this stella is a record of at least the plague of darkness, though explaining the darkness as due to Thera has been challenged, due to lack of ash there. [5] However, W. Friedrich states, "Ash-fall affected the entire South and East Mediteranean. This is confirmed by new excavations on the isle of Crete, Israel, and Egypt." [6] The Thera Eruption is usually either dated c.1602 BC by olive trees found 30' under surface using C_{14}, or dated c.1530BC by comparative pottery[7]

In addition, Pearson states, "The Bristlecone Pine chronology has a ring width minimum at 1597BC and a frost damaged ring at 1560BC indicating major volcanic events around those years…The 1560 date which represents the first proxy marker for a volcanic event in the bristlecone pine record beyond the posterior mean values derived for this study, is particularly noteworthy, as it would fit with the earlier proposed start for the New Kingdom in Egypt, the revised reign of Ahmos, and the description of an unusual and catastrophic storm from the Ahmos Tempest Stela." [8]

Balter adds: "radiocarbon and historical dating by University of Vienna archaeologist Manfred Bietak's team at Tell el-Dab'a in Egypt has concluded that the Thera eruption took place during the New Kingdom era." [9]

Is Esoteric Knowledge Scriptural?

Polished limestone pyramid as it originally appeared c.2500 BC

Esoteric Knowledge: "Understood by or meant for only a few specially instructed or initiated individuals." This subject is related here, albeit briefly, only because it forms the basis for many chronologies supposedly based on the bible.

Are there hidden number patterns in scripture which reveal the dates of major events of bible history, or even dates in the future that God has hidden for the diligent searcher to find out? Further, are there bible codes contained in equidistant letter sequences that only a modern computer could decipher, which would contain dates of events past and future? Is there any basis for supposing there were exactly four millenia before Christ's birth (or 2 after)? Can we multiply the number 7, or multiply Jubilee periods, or use numbers in scripture symbolically to ascertain dates?[1]

Some support their belief in hidden wisdom from certain scriptures such as Pr.25:2 "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings is to search out a matter." What do the other scriptures say about this? 2P.1:20 states, "Knowing this first that no prophesy of the scripture is of any private interpretation," and Pr.8:9 says, "All the words of My mouth...they are all plain to him who understands."

Prof. John J. Davies comments, "During the inter-testamental era, numbers were given considerable attention by teachers interested in future events. Numerical patterns were manipulated quite freely and frequently by these teachers in order to predict certain events, and this practice led to considerable frustration on the part of the people."[2]

Russel comments: "...in their attempts to fulfill unfulfilled prophesy, they make fairly frequent use of what we might call allegorical arithmetic in which much play is made with figures and cycles and number patterns.

Such calculations as these led inevitably to frustration and disappointment on the part of the people when it was found that the appointed time had come and gone and the end was not yet. The frustrations experienced by these early peoples are experienced today by well-meaning Christian people who uncritically accept the numerical calculations of popular prophetic teachers who have a flair for the spectacular. Apparently allegorical arithmetic has an appeal to many peoples under differing cultural and historical circumstances."[3]

Can Tree Rings Date Noah's Flood?

Tree rings usually are added only once a year to a tree, thus counting all the rings of a living tree is usually a good indicator of the age of the tree. Most of the time in dating living trees though, the samples are not taken all the way to the core; only short samples of tree rings are taken. Also, many dendrochronologies are "builded" from short lived trees and logs and "wiggle matched" with similar ring patterns from similar trees (living or dead samples), and statistical probabilities of how closely the rings match are then made to calculate a chronology.

Serious problems have been revealed with these statistical probabilities however, which make this "chronology building" based on wiggle matching unreliable, especially the further back in history one tries to go. Roll comments, "In 1986, D. Yamaguchi recognized that trees tend to auto-correlate; that is, they possess the ability to cross-match with each other in several places within the tree ring sequence… Should we expect tree ring growth patterns to produce genuine correspondences at the same historical dates, when the climates (and in particular the micro-climates of Ireland, England, and Germany) are so different?" [1-3]

However, if we had a <u>continuous ring count</u> from a living tree that began to grow just after Noah's flood, this should give us a general idea of when the flood occurred. We cannot be precise though; for it has been shown that an additional yearly ring can occur (Up to one to four additional rings every 4 years) *if the conditions are just right.*[4]

It has been surmised that in the first few centuries after Noah's flood, the longer winter days (during cooling stage of the ice age), especially if combined with a short draught period, could be conducive to producing an extra ring. Brian Thomas says, "Understanding that climate and other changes cause trees to produce more rings than the number of years they've been growing reconciles tree rings with biblical history. And given the wild climate swings since the ice age, there is every reason to expect extra rings in trees that began growing soon after the flood." [5]

On the other hand, some trees may not grow an annual ring at all. It has been stated that "Bristlecone Pines… may not grow annual rings at all in dry years…They respond so closely to local weather, he (Harold S Gladwin) argues, that ring patterns from within a few hundred miles of each other 'show no similarity whatever'"[6]. Therefore, if a species of tree were resistant to the effects of rot, a continuous living ring count of the oldest living tree would probably give a general estimate of the time trees began growing immediately after Noah's flood.

As of 2002, the oldest living tree, a Bristlecone Pine appropriately named Methuselah (after Methuselah who died the year of the flood), was said to contain 4723 annual rings.[7] Since the resin of the Bristlecone Pine is highly impervious to rot, insects, bacteria and fungi, and if the sample taken from Methuselah was taken from a full depth core drilling, we could expect that the oldest Bristlecone Pine alive today, started growing just after Noah's flood, and thus would be a general indicator of the date of Noah's flood. If all the rings are annual, this gives us a date of about 2719 BC for Noah's flood, which fits close to the oldest date proposed in this paper (2662 BC) as gleaned from the scriptures.[8]

The Reasonable Boundaries of a Bible Based Chronology

The authority of God's word is the key to forming any chronological count from Adam to Malachi. Scripture, while not naming dates, sets definite boundaries for each period of history before Christ. As much as chronologers differ on specific dates, we must never read into the text what we wish were there, and the word of God will not allow thousands of years to be added to the genealogies, as some do, usually to agree with a dating system such as Carbon 14, sherds of pottery, or archaeological digs.

On the other hand, some chronologers attempt to *fix* every date in the Bible to the exact year, even where scripture is not that specific. Plus or minus 1 year, no one questions the Old Testament dates (CCC) from 722-400 BC (from the dispersal of the Northern Kingdom to the last prophet Malachi).

Prior to this, the (conservative) disagreement gets increasingly larger to where one can be up to 500 years different than someone else's tally by the time of Creation, but this is the limit from any reasonable interpretation of the Hebrew Manuscripts. Similarly, each period of history such as the Egyptian bondage, the Judges, and the Kings, has definite boundaries, even though we may disagree on particular dates. Some stretch the early periods much longer based on the LXX, the Sam., archaeological, or C_{14} datings; all of which demonstrate chronological contradictions.

For example, Brenton comments on the LXX: "In consequence of the fact that the NT writers used on many occasions the Septuagint version, some have deduced a new argument for its authority, a theory which we might have thought to be sufficiently disproved by the defects of the version, which evince that it is a merely human work. But the fact that the NT writers used the version on many occasions supplies a new proof in opposition to the idea of its authority, for in not a few places they do not follow it, but they supply a version of their own which rightly represents the Hebrew text although contradicting the Septuagint…they used what was already familiar to the ears of the converted Hellenists when it was sufficiently accurate to suffice the matter at hand."[1]

Although we cannot fix many dates in absolute time**, there are definite boundaries for any conservative chronology.** This point needs to be emphasized. For example, from the Hebrew, using minimums and maximums possible for each period, the creation date *must* fall between 3930 BC and 4370 BC. "Conservative" means no gaps in the Genesis chronogenealogies or reliance on other OT manuscripts than the Hebrew Massoretic text and Hebrew DSS. That is less than a 500 year difference from the very beginning! (interestingly, note that all dates proposed for time periods reckoned by models herein result in a 44thc.BC date for creation). (We have already discussed why the Jewish calendar, LXX, and Sam. Texts are unreliable).

The critical differences among conservative chronologers are: half year differences in genealogies (since we don't know the time of the year each son was born) from Gen.5 & 11=0-11 years; the time of Israel in Egypt, 215-430years; Joshua and the elders, 20-63 years; the time of the judges to Samuel, 396-530 years; Samuel to David 20 years, the time of the kings, 345-390 years.

In the early pre-Moses times, I'm assuming that when the bible says, 40 years, the true length of time passed is rounded off. Today, when saying 40 years, we would be talking 39.5-40.5 actual years, and over many generations would average out to 40.0 years; and we could just add the numbers up in the chrono-genealogies to get a correct total (nearest year). However with ages, we say a person is 40, we mean 40-41 actual years. The question is, do we have evidence how they rounded off ? Scribes from c.1000 BC give an example:

2 Sam 5:4-5 says "David *was* thirty years old when he began to reign, *and* he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah."

1 Kings 2:11 relates, "And the days that David reigned over Israel *were* forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem. "

Barnes says, "**Forty years -** In all forty years and six months. See 2Sa_5:5, and 1Ch_3:4. The Jewish writers almost universally omit the fractions of a year." Gill adds, "**seven years reigned he in Hebron**; the six months over are omitted, 2Sa_5:5; this part of his reign was over Judah only:

and thirty three years reigned he in Jerusalem; over the twelve tribes, in all forty, which round number is only given; though in fact he reigned six months more.

Note in 2 Samuel, it specifies years and months for Hebron and only years for Jerusalem. I would assume therefore that the 33 years was 33 years,0 months.

The parallel verse in 1 Kings omits the months; as is the norm. So if they are generally omitting fractions, our numbers on average per generation could be a half year too low; thus our timelines should go back a little further to represent real time.

There are many who approach this subject with the total time span already decided, thus all years must fit into this period of time. Some influential church fathers propagated this idea. Also, the popular 1st c. BC book of 2 Enoch (32:2-33:2), the Talmud (b.Sanhedrin 97b), and the Epistle of Barnabas (15) teach millennial periods of history.[2]

Many studying this subject, both from church and Jewish tradition, first *assume* a "7000 year plan of God; accordingly, their chronological periods are defined before any scriptures are consulted. (Thus, 6000 years of human history would culminate with the 2nd coming of the Messiah followed by a millennium). For example, the popular chronology of Bishop Ussher makes the creation date 4004 BC, 4 millenia before his date for the Messiah. The end should have come 2000 years later in 1997 followed by a thousand year millenium period.

This philosophy is also tied into a belief in *divine numbers*; especially the number 7, even going so far as to say, "that every number in the bible has a significant meaning."
As John Davis says, "…the greater proportion of books on this general subject are produced by men, who at the expense of sound methodology, have sought to present spectacular and unusual ideas employing the numbers of the bible." Further, it has been said that "More than any other branch of Christian learning, chronography felt a keen attraction to non-biblical sources."[3]

I suggest a different approach, for those who hold the scriptures to be the inspired words of God. I suggest that we search the scriptures, and based on this data alone, determine parameters for the various stages in history; especially the events recorded in scripture. Then, if secular dates still fall outside these limits, that is to say, the limits of the scriptural evidence, we hope for scientific discovery to catch up, rather than compromise sound principles of scripture interpretation to synchronize dates from secular sources with the Bible chronologies.

As for the differences in our biblically derived dates, we should not be dogmatic (this is not doctrine), but we should study this area enough so as to be able to defend the historicity of the accounts, and that we may have a reasonable and biblically defensible time-frame. For in the final analysis, a studied understanding of the bible's chronology is really a defense of the truth of the entire Word of God.

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Andrew Steinmann, (Associate Professor of Theology and Hebrew at Concordia U.,Ill.) argues, "Gen. 1:5 begins the cycle of the day. With the creation of light, it is now possible to have a cycle of light and darkness which God labels day and night…Having an evening and a morning amounts to having one full day.

Hence the following equation is what Gen 1:5 expresses: Evening and morning = one day. 'Therefore, by using a most unusual grammatical construction, Gen. 1 is defining what a day is. This is especially needed in this verse since day is used in two senses in this one verse. It's first appearance means the time during a daily cycle that is illuminated by daylight (as opposed to night). The second used means something different, a time-period that encompasses both the time of daylight and the time of darkness. 'It would appear as if the text is very carefully crafted so an alert reader cannot read it as "the first day." Instead, by omission of the article, it must be read as one day, thereby defining a day as something akin to a 24-hour solar period with light and darkness and transitions between day and night, even though there was no sun until the 4th day.
This would explain the lack of definite articles on the 2nd through 5th days. Another evening and morning constituted "a" not "the" second day. Another evening and morning made a third day and so forth. On the 6th day, the article finally appears.

But even here the grammar is strange since there is no article on (day) as would be expected.
This would indicate that the 6th day was a regular solar day, but that it was also *the culminating day of creation*. Likewise, the 7th day is referred to…with lack of an article on (day). This also, the author is implying, was a regular solar day. Yet it was a special day, because God had finished His work of creation."

7. Humphreys, Russell. *Starlight and Time, Solving the Puzzle of Distant Starlight in a Young Universe.* Master Books, Green Forest, AR. 1994. pp.105-106. While the 6 days in scripture are definitely from man's perspective and were 24 hours long, it has been postulated that time as measured here could be much different from time at the edge of the universe, and during the initial expansion of space, time relative to the earth could have even stood still.

Clocks do run slower at lower altitudes than at higher altitudes where gravity is less, as predicted by Einstein's general theory of relativity, and as measured by the Royal observatory at Greenwich, England and the atomic clock in mile high Boulder, Colorado. As Russ Humphries has observed: if the universe has boundaries and has expanded significantly at creation (if God "stretched out the heavens" literally), there would have been vastly increased net gravity toward the center, where we appear to be as we look out into space, and our clocks at creation week would have run much slower than at the edge of the universe (a massive time dilation); thus answering the question, "How can we see distant stars in a young universe." .
7a.Daskalakis, Christos, *Of Cosmic Proportions*, CRSQ, v. 42, 12/05, p. 199.

A further refinement of this model is proposed: "When Dr. Humphreys proposed his theory in 1994, he accounted for the observed Hubble constant…and the CMB by acknowledging an expansion of space. He cites Gen. 1:6-8 as justification. But this passage can also be understood as describing the expansion of matter out of the singularity.

According to this interpretation, there is no need for an expansion of space. Classic dynamics alone can account for the Hubble constant and the CMB (Cosmic Microwave Background). In addition, recent observations of type 1a Supernovae, which suggest an accelerating universe, can be seen as the natural result of a finite spherical cosmos, with no need for any dark energy."
8. Morris, pp.55,56.
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The exegetical arguments for this view are: (1) Gen. 1:31 and 2:1-3 omit the "evening and morning" conclusion. (2) The unending nature of the Seventh day is confirmed by God's rest in Hebrews 4.
However, it is obvious from Ex. 20:9-11 that the 7th day of creation was the same length as our seventh day of the week: "Six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the 7th day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it, you shall do no work...for in 6 days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested the 7th day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."
See excepts also at AnswersinGenesis.com, articles, 6/6/07.
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The second hypothesis, that the present form of the document originated in the time of Noah, after the flood, is supported by the following considerations: First, it accounts for the three names of countries in the easiest manner. The three descendants of Noah had by this time given their names to these countries. The supposition of a double origin or application of these names is not necessary."

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He anticipates the objection sometimes raised, "Then why are the years stated in such detail and quantity, and why would the account tell us the age of each patriarch when he begat?"
However, his only explanation is, "The conflation takes place not at the point of supplying the actual years at which the father had a child; it is instead at the point where the name of the next noteworthy descendant is given instead of the immediate son.

The ages given function as an indicator of the fact that the effects of sin had not yet affected human regenerative powers as seriously as they have more recently. The same point, of course, is to be made with regard to human longevity." p. 103. He also posits a day-age explanation for Gen.1. The genealogy (a list only without any years) of Gen. 5 &11 is repeated in 1 Chron.1. See comments on Matt.1.
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In addition, some attempt to argue that there is a numerical pattern to the ages of the patriarchs in Gen. 5. Tenny says, "A careful analysis of the ages demonstrates that they are all figures of 2 sorts; multiples of 5 (5n) or multiples of 5+7 or 2x7 (5n+7x2). For example, the age of Seth, 912, =(5x181)+7. Since every one of the 10 ages in this passage is reducible in this fashion, along with many other ages and chronological totals of the Patriarchs, the scheme cannot possible be accidental.
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JACOB & Joseph

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14. Leupold, H.C. Exposition of Genesis, vol.2. Baker books, Grand Rapids,1942.
15. James Henry Breasted, *A History of Egypt* (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1954), p. 166.

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1. Davis, Craig. DSSEnglishBible.com
2. Smith, William. Smith's Bible Dictionary, 1884, 1971 edition, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Mich. p. 585. According to scholars, the Sam. Pentateuch was probably made in Manasseh's day, when he built a temple on Mt Gerazim. The oldest copy of the Sam..we have is dated 1150 AD (the Talmud states it is a forged record).p.831. "Again, in Gen.2:2, "And God had finished on the 7th day" is altered into "the sixth" lest God's rest on the Sabbath day might seem incomplete."- Smith.
3. JF&B, vol.1, pp. 318-319.

4. Archer, Gleason, Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1982, p. 35.
5.Williams, Pete. *Some Remarks Preliminary to a Biblical Chronology.* Creation Technical Journal 12(1).1998, p.3 (chart of data from Gen.5&11 comparing the LXX, Samaritan, and Massoretic texts.) See also p. 4 "Examination of the Septuagint for Evidence of Alteration of the Text."
It is interesting that these emendations in the LXX chronologies are single digit changes to the text; which phenomena we also see frequently in numbers in the Hebrew text in the kings books (though that is thought to be due to copy error).
6. Whiston, W. translation of *Josephus: Complete Works*, Kregel, 1981. A quote from Rev. Henry Stebbing, p.xiv.
7. Cook, F. *The Holy Bible Commentary* London, 1871, pp. 301,302.
7a. Ray, Paul,J. Associates for Biblical Research, "The Duration of the Israelite Sojourn in Egypt" 2012. First pub. In Bible & Spade, 2007.
8.Gadeloff, David. Jewish bible quarterly 44:3, How long was the Sojourn in Egypt? 2016.
8a. Eisenman, Robert and Wise, Michael. Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered. 1992. Bibliotecapleyades.net
9. Willliams,. P.9.
9a. Sarfati, J. Biblical Chronogenealogies. Ibid.
10. Corson, David, p. 114. If Paul did believe in what was probably the Jewish thinking of the day (215 yrs;see Josephus), it's remarkable he used language that could be interpreted either way.

10a. Sarfati, Jonathan. Creation.com "6000 years of Biblical History."

11. To bolster the argument for a sojourn in more than one land, it has been alleged that the Hebrew for the word, "land" in Gen. 15:13 is really a plural, and thus should read "lands." However, this is just plain false.
12. Riggs, Jack Prof., *The Length of Israel's Sojourn in Egypt*, Grace Theological Journal 12.1, winter, 1971, pp. 18-35.
13. Haley, John W. *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible*, Baker, Grand Rapids, Mich.1977. p. 416.
13a. Albright, W.F. The biblical period from Abraham to Ezra, 1963. WH Albright. Harper and Row, NY.
14. An average generation in Egypt may be estimated by Joseph, who wed at 30 (Gen. 41:45-6), and had 2 children who could understand him when he was 39, when Jacob blessed them. It is likely that Manasseh, his firstborn, was born when Joseph was 31-32.
So, if one believes these "generations" in this prophesy in Genesis were normal father to son generations, and Israel returns to their land in the fourth generation (after 40 years in the wilderness), they would have been in Egypt about 215-40=175 years, still too long even for normal generations. (4x31=124 years for Egypt and the wilderness, less 40=84 years in Egypt)
15. Hendiksen, The NT Commentary: Exposition on Galatians, Baker, Grand Rapids, p. 138.
16. There are those who attempt to get out of the obvious meaning of the phrase in Ex.12:40 'children of Israel,' referring to Jacob's family, by saying that this refers to 'spiritual Israel'; those of faith under the covenant with Abraham.
17. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, A Commentary. 1880.1989 Eerdmans. vol.1, p. 258.
18. The passage lists 11 names, but Kiel says "As the word בְּנֵי is wanting after רֶשֶׁף, , we must hold Rephah and Resheph to be brothers." Kiel, vol.3, 1 Chron. P. 142.
19. .Keil,C.F., Delitzch, F. *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Hendrickson, Peabody, Mass. 1989, vol.1, Exodus p.470.
20. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *A Commentary*. Eerdmans's. Grand Rapids, Mich. 1989. vol.1, p. 317
21. Allis, O. p. 281,457.
22. Keil,C.F., Delitzch, F. *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Hendrickson, Peabody, Mass. 1989, vol.1, Exodus p.470.
23. Jameison Fausset &Brown, 1989. Eerdams. vol.1, p. 519, Numbers 3:39.
24. Keil, Ibid.
24a.Keil, op.cit.Gen.50:23.

24b.Wikipedia.com.
25. Op.cit., pp.211-212.
Kaiser, Walter, p. 141.
26. Clark, Adam, Clark's Commentary, Abingdon Press.
27. Geisler, Norman.Howe, Thomas. When Critics Ask. Victor Books, USA. 1992, p.70.
28. Gill, John. An Exposition of the Old and New Testaments, 1796. 2006 ed. Unabridged.
Gill comments: Gen 16:2 "And Sarai said unto Abram, behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing,.... Or, "hath shut me up" (d); that is, her womb, as were the wombs of the house of Abimelech, Gen_20:18; so that she could not conceive and bear children; she now at this age despaired of having children, perceiving very probably that it ceased to be with her after the manner of women."
29. e.g.: Kitchen, K.A. Ancient Orient and Old Testament. IVP, 1966, Chicago, pp. 52-3.
30. Ray, Paul J Jr. Op.cit.
31. Ellicott, CJ,Ellicott Commentary on the whole bible, 1959, Zondervan,1981.
32. Barnes, Albert. Barnes Notes, 1836. Baker 1975.
33. Driver, SR, the Cambridge Bible of Schools and Colleges, Cambridge, the University Press, 1900.
34.Jamieson Fausset and Brown. A Commentary. 1989. Eerdmans. vol.1. p. 319. Exodus 12 :40.
35.Some who hold to 215 years say this large number of people includes any servants Jacob may have had. One could posit that **if** Jacob attained to the wealth of his grandfather, Abraham, he may have had 300 servants too: "trained *servants,* born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen."(Gen.14:14) Although Jacob's had a large family; there is no hint of this when Joseph visited his brothers (Gen.37) or enumerated when they were listed as coming into Egypt (Gen.46).
36. Spence-Jones, The Pulpit Commentary, London Ck Paul 1881. Baker, Grand Rapids, Mich.1996.
37. Ray, Paul J Jr. Op. cit.
38. Hoehner, Harold W. "The Duration of the Egyptian Bondage," Bibliotheca Sacra 126. October-December 1969:306-16.

CONQUEST

1. Whiston, Joephus.pp.110,129 Ant. 5.1.29;6.5.4. Josephus has Joshua judging for 25 years with another 18 years between him and the first judge. Aricanus makes 30 years more. Letter to Aristides.
2. D. Linsey, *Bible Knowledge Commentary* by Walvoord & Zuck, Victor, Wheaton, Ill. 1985. p. 373.
3. Keil & Delitszch, Commentary, vol.2, The Book of Judges, p.290.
4. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown. A Commentary. Eerdmans. 1989, vol. 1, p.71.Judges 1:13.
5. Keil & Delitzch, vol. 2, Judges 1:13, p. 157; I Chron.4:13, p.91.
6.Num. 33:39; Deut. 34:7.
7. Barnes, Albert. Barnes Notes, Baker books, Grand Rapids, 1949.

JUDGES

1.Corson, David, Israel's Historical Chronology, self published 2000, p.50.
2. Jones, op cit. p.73
3.Hammond, p.99.
4. Corson, pp.165,167.
4a. The other way to add this would be to start with the first judge Othniel and use 80 years for Ehud, which would total 438/448 to Samuel.
5. Anderson, Robert. The Coming Prince, 1984, Kregel Pub., Grand Rapids, Mich. p.xvi.
6. Corson, p.53.
7. Rawlinson, Pulpit Commentary, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich.1983. Judges.
8. Ellicott, J.C. Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers. Cassell, London. 1900.

9. Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges. Judges. G.A. Cooke, Cambridge U. 1913.
10. Poole, Matthew; A Commentary on the Whole Bible, vol.1,p.463.Henrickson.
11. Whitcomb, op. cit.
12. Ussher, James. pp. 378-387. Ussher has Eli and Samson concurrent with the 40-year Philistine oppression, which he believes ends seven months after Eli's death, with the return of the Ark.
13. Jones, Floyd N., Chronology of the Old Testament, 1999, Kingswood Press, Woodlands, TX, pp.75-6.
13a. "Archbishop Ussher, and those who follow him, suppose that the rests, or times of peace, should be reckoned, not from the time in which a particular judge gave them deliverance; but from the period of the preceding deliverance…
This is a most violent manner of settling chronological difficulties, a total perversion of the ordinary meaning of terms, and not likely to be intended by the writer of this book."
Adam Clark's Commentary, Preface to the book of Judges. (StudyLight.org)
14. Ibid.p.84.
15. Anderson, p. xvi, footnote.
16. Corson, David, Israel's Historical Chronology, self published 2000, p.51.
17. Halley, Henry. Halley's bible handbook, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Mich, 1965, p.169. See also Pythagoras, Gnostics, Augustine.

SAMUEL

1. Haley, John. Haley makes "some 2 years after" 1 Sam.10 to 1 Sam.13. p. 425.
2. JF&B, vol.1, p. 162; Kiel, vol.2, 1 Samuel, pp. 122-123.
3. Ussher, p.392.
4. Keil, vol. 1, p. 123.
5. Davis, p. 86.
6. JF&B, vol. 1, p. 122.
7. Doddridge, Philip. *The Family Expositor*. Etheridge Ed. 1807, p.189
8. Corson, David. A Comparison of Two Conservative Bible Chronologies, self published, 2003. p.
9. Jones, p. 101.
9a. Keil, op.cit. 2 Sam. 3-5.
10. Barnes, Albert, *Barnes Notes on the New Testamen*t. *Acts*, p. 206, Baker, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1975
11. Doddridge, op. cit.
12.Keil, vol.2, Judges, p. 283.
13. Doddridge, op.cit.
14. Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges,1 Sam.7:2. 1921. Cambridge U.Press. Cambridge.

15. Keil & Delitzch, op.cit. 1 Samuel 7:2.

16. Oakes, John. How long did Saul Reign, Evidence for Christianity. 11.29.2011
17. Rawlinson, G. The Pulpit Commentary. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1983, 1880.
18. Alford. Henry. Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary.1861. 1976.
19. Ussher James, The Annals of the World, 1650. Internet Archives.com. pp.68-72
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1 KINGS 6:1

1. Anderson, Robert. *The Coming Prince*,1984, Kregel. Grand Rapids, Mich. p.81
2. Corson, David, Israel's Historical Chronology, self-published 2000, p.162.

3. Clark, Adam, *Four Hundred Eightieth year.* "This chronology meets with the approbation of most people. See Usher. (Chap. xii.) Some, however, find a difficulty in reconciling it with Acts xiii. 20., which seems to attribute 450 years to the government of the judges. (Calmet) --- Septuagint have 440; Josephus 592, though Ruffin neglects the 90 in his version; Petau 520; Severus 582; Clement of Alexandria 566; Vossius 380; Cano 590; Serarius 680. - George Haydock's Catholic Bible Commentary.
It need scarcely be noticed, that among chronologists there is a great difference of opinion concerning this epocha. Glycas has 330 years; Melchior Canus, 590 years; Josephus, 612 years; Sulpicius Severus, 588; Clemens Alexandrinus, 570; Cedrenus, 672; Codomanus, 598; Vossius and Capellus, 580; Serarius, 680; Nicholas Abraham, 527; Maestlinus, 592; Petavius and Valtherus, 520.
4. Meyer, Heinrich, Meyer's Commentary on the NT. Acts13:20. 1980 Edinburgh.
5 Jones,pp. 75,97.
6. C.F Keil, F.Delitzsch .Commentary on the OT v.3, p.315. Hendriksen 1989 ed.
6a.Spence Donald, Pulpit Commentary. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, vol.6, 1 Kings 6, 1983,1880.
7. Theile. Op.cit. p. 197. Theile believes, "It is likewise clear that in connection with later editorial work on the involved chronological data, misunderstanding could and did take place. Such we have noted in 2 Chron.15:19 & 16:1, in 2 Kings 8:16 & 14:21, in the order and sequence the reigns were placed in 2 Kings 15:23-38; and in the synchronisms of 2 Kings 17:1 and 18:1,9,10.
8 Origen, Commentary on John, book 10:23. Early Christian Writings.Roberts-Donaldson tr.
9 The Pulpit Commentary on 1 Kings 6:1.1880 D.S.Jones.
10. See Henriksen on Matthew 1, pp.125-6 for possible reasons.
11.*Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown,* vol. 3, p.2
12 Rawlinson, The Pulpit Commentary, vol. 7, Ezra, p. 100, Eerdman's, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1983.
14.Haley, pp.382,383,393. There is a general pattern. In these parallel accounts, it should be noted that the true number has been shown to be with 2 Sam. instead of I Chron., and the true number in 2 Chron. as opposed to 1 Kings.
15. Barnes, p.205.
16. Haley, p.380.
17. Patai, Raphael, The Jewish Alchemists. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1994
18. Finegan, Jack, p. 4.
18a. Davis, John J. op. cit. p. 38.
18b.Pope, M.H. Number, p.563. quoted by John J.Davis. Bibilcal Numerology, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1968, p. 34.
19.Kiel and Delitzch, commentary on the OT, p. 53. Hendrickson. 19. Ibid. p. 426.
Rawlinson makes 580-600 years for this period.
20. Ibid. p. 380.
21. Hervey A. Dict, Bib, vol.2, p,22
22. Rawlinson, The Pulpit Commentary, vol.6, 1 Kings 6:1, p. 515.
23. Allis, op. cit. p.397.
24 Ellicott's commentary for English Readers I Kings 6:1.
25Kiel, vol.3, 1 Kings, p. 67, fn #1
25a. Smith, William. Smith's bible dictionary. Vol.2 p.22, John Murray Publishing. London. 1893. (Internet Archive, Princeton Theological Seminary)
25b.Corson, David, Israel's Historical Chronology, self published 2000 p. 71
26.Barnes, Albert. Barnes Notes. Baker books, Grand Rapids Mich. 1949,1975.
27. Josephus, Flavious. Antiquities. He also makes the interval of the building of Solomon's temple to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD to be 1130/1180 years which dates Solomon's temple at 1200/1250 BC (*Ant*. B,VI ch.iv.8; p.696), but in other places his date for this ranges from 1059-1048 BC (p. 588 in *Wars* 6.10.1), and once is 957 BC (p. 612).

He places the Exodus at 1650 BC and creation at 4485BC. (pp.680,696, Whiston, *Dissertation V*). He also gives Solomon an 80-year reign despite the clear statements in both 2 Chron. 9:30 and 1 Kings 11:42. (*Ant*.8.7.8; p. 183)
28. Flavious Josephus Against Apion 2.2, p. 623.
29. Stephen C Meyers, Biblical Archaeology, "the date of The Exodus according to ancient writers." comments: "One of the major stumbling blocks for the conservative is their understanding of the 480 years from the founding of the temple to the Exodus. This number does not include the one hundred and eleven years of oppression in the book of Judges that ancient writers included in their totals." Although we do posses definite evidence of Jews using letters for numbers on the Maccabean coins from 165 BC, these are the earliest examples we have.
29a.M.H.Pope "Numbers", p.563. Biblical Numerology, John J Davis, Baker book house, 1968.p.33.
30. Corson, David, Israel's Historical Chronology, self published 2000, pp. 57-64,126.
31. Haley, p. 22.
32. Smith, p.456.
33. Haley, p. 20.
34. David, Peter, Hard Sayings of the Bible, p. 773.
35. Davis, John J. Biblical Numerology. Baker. Grand Rapids. 1968. pp. 34-35; citing W.F.Albright, "The Lachish letters after 5 years" BAOR,#82, 4/1941.
36. Pope, M.H. *Numbers*, The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible, Nashville, Ambingdon Press, 1962, p. 563
37. Crisswell Study Bible. p. 1147.
38. Barnes, A. *Barnes Bible Commentary,* 1 Kings 6:1, Baker, 1949. p. 155.
38a. Josephus: Complete works, Whiston, William 1637, 1971. Kregel. "Flavious Josephus against Apion" 1.17,18;2.2 pp.612,613,623.
39. Aardsma, Mark, *Biblical Chronologist*.org. Answers: "*What's wrong with the traditional dates for the Exodus*" 11/20/00.
40. Wikipedia. Jubilees.
41 Thorpe, Tory. https://groups.io/g/NewChronology/topic/jubilees_talmud_etc/54284058 2.21.2004
42. Smith, ibid. vol.2, p.22
43. Clark, Adam. Clarke's Commentary . Abingdon Press, NY.NY. 1826. 1 Kings.
44. Encyclopedia Britannica. I Kings 6:1.

DIVIDED KINGDOM

1. Josephus has 80 years for Solomon despite this clear statement in 2 Chron. 9:30: "And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel for 40 years. And Solomon slept with his fathers…"
2. Haley, p. 399.
3. Jordan, James B. *Confusion Among the Kings,* Biblical Chronology Newsletter. Oct. 1990. Institute for Christian Economics.
4. Keil, vol.3, p. 409.
5.Ibid, p. 385.
5a. Rohl, David, The Biblical Exodus, Youtube. 2017
5b BAS, Shishak's Campaign: A Meeting of Archaeology and the Bible? Feb.4,2022.
5c Nathan Steinmeyer. BAS, Dating Biblical Wars through Magnetic Fields, 10/28, 2022.
5d. Wikipedia. Osorkon1.
6. Thiele, Edwin R. *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrrew Kings,* Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1965, pp. 5,11.
7. Pierce, L. *Evidentialism-The Bible and Assyrian Chronology*, Creation Technical Journal 15(1) 2001 pp.62-68 & *Ussher's Timeline for the Divided Kingdom* at www.Answersingenesis.org.

8. Allis, Oswald. *The Old Testament: it's claims and it's critics.* Baker, Grand Rapids, Mich.1972, p. 407.
9. Thiele, p.33
9a. Kolberg, Bruno. Redating the hebrew kings, 2020.
10. Josephus. Op cit. Josephus gives two secular sources for the date of Solomon's temple. One from the records of the Phonecians; the second from Menander, the Ephesian. Both have 143yrs and 8 months between the founding of Carthage and the temple. For the founding of Carthage, Timaeus has 814BC, Menander has 819BC or 826BC, and Philo has 820BC.
So Josephus, who quotes Menader, should put the temple at 963-970 BC, which agrees with the short kings chronology. That the appendix of his book doesn't do so is reflective of both Whiston's chronology, who puts the death of Solomon at 976 BC, and Josephus doubling Solomon's reign to 80 years. (Whiston's) Dissertation v, p.687 Ant.7.8 p.612-613.
Josephus says, "and now I shall add Menander the Ephesian as an additional witness. This Menander wrote the Acts that were done both by the Greeks and barbarians under every one of the Tyrian kings…so the whole time from the reign of Hiram til the building of Carthage amounts to the sum of 155 years and 8 mo. Since then the temple was built at Jerusalem in the 12th year of the reign of Hiram, there were from the building of the temple until the building of Carthage, 143yrs and 8 mo." Against Apion I.18. So if Carthage was built in 814 BC, the building of the temple would be complete at 957 BC in Solomon's 11th year (1 Kings 6:38); which puts Solomon's death at 928 BC.
11.Jones, p.140.
12. Jones,op.cit. p. 135.

Persian Period

1. Thiele, p.216.
2. Keil, p.507
3. *Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown; A Commentary*,1989, Eerdman's, Grand Rapids, Mich. vol. 1, Ezra, p.581.
4 Keil. Ezra, vol. 3, p. 21.
5 Kiel & Delitzch, vol. 8, Jeremiah pp. 370,374.
6. Jamieson, vol. 1, p. 579.
7. Rawlinson, G. *The Pulpit Commentary* vol. 7, Ezra, p.1. Eerdman's, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1983.
8. Corson, David, Israel's Historical Chronology, self-published 2000, p. 242-246.
9. Jordan, James B. Biblical Chronology Newsletter. *The Chronology of Ezra and Nehemiah*, vol. #3, pp.1-4 1991. Institute for Christian Economics.
10. Smith, William. *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 1884,1971 Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Mich. P. 57.
11. Cooper, Charles. Parousia, summer 1999, p.7.
12. Keil & Delitsch, vol.3, Ezra 7, p.95.
17. Jones, Floyd N.,. p. 255, 276. (Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended, p. 358)"-1728, London. Newton (and Jones) follows this with Ezra 3:8-10:44, then Neh.1:1-7:4, then 12:27-13:31. See pp.251-260 for a fuller discussion of Ezra-Nehemiah.
13. Rawlinson, p.86.87.
14. Kiel, vol.3 Ezra, pp. 72-75.
15. ibid
16.Brown, A.P. *Nehemiah and Narrative Order in the Book of Ezra*, Bibliotheca Sacra, April, 2005, pp.186-187
18. Kiel, op.cit. Nehemiah, p.147.
19. Horschander, Jacob. The Book of Esther in the light of History. 1923.pp. 31,32,40.
20. Whiston, Josephus. Antiquities 11.6. p.237.

21.www.1911 Encyclopedia.com, *Artabanus*; Biography Resource Center, *Xerxes*; Encyclopedia Americana, *Artaxerxes*; Ctesias,Pers.20; Aristotle Pol.V.1311b.
22. Jones, pp. 202,215. Jones citing Ussher, Annals p.134, Xenophon Hellenica,bookV,i,31-6 (Loeb vol.2,p.21-5).
23. If Smerdis is counted, it would be Cambyses, Smerdis, Darius I, Xerxes. Cambyses had secretly murdered his brother Smerdis. While Cambyses was at war, Patizeithes, a Mede, (the man in charge of his household), and his brother, who also happened to be named Smerdis, assumed control; Smerdis, pretending to be the royal Smerdis.

Cambyses dies, and Smerdis rules 7 months until they are found out and killed by Darius and friends. Most would question if we should count the short reign of Smerdis though, as he was not legitimate. See also Kiel on Ezra 4:24, vol.3, p. 73. Otherwise the 4th king is Longimanus.
24. Boucharlat, R. "Suza under Archaemenid Rule, pp.54-67 in Mesopotamia and Iran in the Persian period, 559-331 BC. London, 1997.
25. Herodotus says that Xerxes' wife was name Amestris, and that she buried people alive as an offering to her god.
26. Herodotus, *The Histories*, c. 450 BC, 2003 ed., Penguin, NYNY. 7.184-6, pp.480-1. "…first there was the fleet of 1207 ships, belonging to the various nations which sailed from Asia…Persians, Medes, or Sacae…the infantry was 1,700,000 strong and the cavalry 80,000…
To this moreover must be added the troops which were collected by Xerxes as he passed through Europe…Thracians, Paeonians, Eordi, Bottiaei, Chalcidians, Byrgi, Pierians, Macedonians, Perrhaebians, Enionians, Dolopes, Magnetes, Achaeans,…"
27.Barnes Notes, Esther, Baker, Grand Rapids,Mich. 1949.
28. Wikipedia, Xerxes.
29. Wikipedia states, "Xerxes is the Greek version of the Old Persian name Xšaya-ṛšā, which is today known in New Persian as Khashayar (خشایار). Daiva Inscriptions of Xerxes, lines 6–13".
30. Wikipedia, "Ahaseurus" Bible Reference 3.
31. William Struse, "Esther, Ahaseurus & Artaxerxes: Who was the Persian king of 127 Provinces" Academia.com.
32. Encyclopedia Iranica. Dampasia.
33. Ctesias of Cnides, a Reappraisal. by Jon P Strank, U of Amsterdam, Ancient History. Mnemosyne 60 (2007) p.25.
34. Kiel & Delitzch, Ezra 7, p.95
35. Herodotus, The Histories. p.208,212, ¶ 84,88.
36. Clark, Adam, Clarke's Commentary on the whole bible, Esther, Abingdon Press, NY.1810.
37. Hoschander, Jacob. The Book of Esther in the Light of History. JSTOR (Jewish Quarterly Review) July 1919. U of Penn Press. 10.1, p 90.
38. Encyclopedia Brittanica,org. "Esther"
39. Hoschander, ibid.p.92
40 Wikipedia, ibid.
41. Keil, ibid.

Christ's birth

1. Smith, William. Smith's Bible Dictionary. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1948 ed.,1884. pp.374-5.
2. Barnes Notes Isaiah.53:8
3 Larson, Fred. Star of Bethlehem. BethlehemStarMovie.com.
4. Jones, p. 215.
5. Deyoung, Donald. *Astronomy and the Bible*, Baker, Grand Rapids, Mich, 1989, p. 65.

6. Hendriksen, William. *NT Commentary*: Matthew, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1973, p. 169.
7. Ham, Ken. *Not Just an Ordinary Star*, Answers in Genesis.org article 12/20/07.
8. Deyoung, p. 66
9. Jeffrey, Grant. *Armageddon: Appointment with Destiny*. Bantam, NY, NY. 1990, Appendix B, p.179.
9a. Hoerner, Harold. Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ, 1977, Zondervan, p.11.
10. Whiston, Josephus, Ant.7.6.4, p. 365.
11. Martin, p. 13.
12.Ozanne, Charles. *The First 7000 years*. Phoenix Press, Phoenix, Az. 1970, pp.144-149.
13. Rutherford, Adam, *Bible Chronology*, London,1957, pp.417-32.
14. The Birth of Jesus Christ, www.themoorings.org.
15. Filmer, W.E. *The Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great*. Journal of Theological Studies 1966, vol.17 (2) pp.283-298, see p. 293.
16. Rutherford, p.425.
17. Laney, Carl, *Concise Bible Atlas*, Hendrickson, GR, Mich.2003, p. 196.
18. Filmer, op.cit.
19. Swihart, Michael. "Was there a second census under Quirinius that we know of?" 1994. http://athos.rutgers.edu.
20. Finegan, Jack, Principles of Biblical Chronology, 1964, Princeton U Press, Princeton NJ, pp.222-9.
21. Hendrickson, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, v.6, Peabody, Mass. 1994,*The Church History of Eusebius*,I.4, p.88.
22. Mosley, John. The Christmas Star. Griffith Observatory, L.A,Cal., 1987, pp. 17-19. Mosley adds, "Christmas was not celebrated at all until the middle of the 4th c. …Although the winter solstice now occurs on Dec. 22, or sometimes the 21st, it used to occur on Dec.25th . Minor changes in the calendar have shifted it. …Dec. 25th then is the date of the solstice in the old Julian calendar, and the solstice has been celebrated around the world for thousands of years." p. 57-9.
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6 Anderson, pp. 65,254. -Clinton, Fasti Hellenici, vol2, p.42.
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7. Anderson justifies calculating from Nisan 1 thus, "The Persian edict…may in fact have been dated the 1st of Nissan, but no other day being named, the prophetic period must be reckoned, according to a practice common with the Jews, from the Jewish New Year Day."p. 122.
Why would the Persian edict need begin on the first day of the Jewish New Year, and why would the prophesy have to correspond to the very day, when only the month is given in scripture?
7a. The prince that shall come by many is thought to be Vespasian who, through Titus, destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD. But he did not confirm the covenant with many for one week (7 years); neither followed the time of "everlasting righteousness." We should let the scriptures interpret the scriptures. This is speaking of the ruler, to be revealed in the last days, as narrated in the book of Revelation (c.95AD), written after the 70AD destruction of Jerusalem.
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One final chronological note: The time of the resurrection was a popular subject for debate in the early church.
As they attempted to harmonize the accounts from the four gospels, some perceived a chronological problem with Mark's account in Mark 16:9-20. The church fathers show that there is no problem. Eusebius (325 AD) says, "Mark also said that He appeared to her early; not that he rose early, but long before (according to that of Matthew, 'in the end of the Sabbath,' for though He rose then, He did not appear to Mary then, but 'early')." p.124.
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Because Lot and his family made the journey by foot in just a few hours (Genesis 19:15, 23), Sodom must be less than about 20 miles from Zoar (modern Safi). Two Early Bronze Age archaeological sites southeast of the Dead Sea (Bab edh-Dhra and Numeira) reveal evidence of catastrophic collapse and burning along the eastern border fault of the Dead Sea Transform Fault. These two sites are likely the remains of Sodom and Gomorrah."

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Some of the peculiarities of Ussher's chronology are: the beginning Daniel's 69 Weeks of years in 454 BC (pp.146,152) instead of 444 BC, and using a solar year for the 69x7 year period where the bible clearly alludes to a 360-day year there (cp. the jubilees in Lev.25 and months in Rev.10-12).
He does this by making Artaxerxes viceroy for 9 years with his father Xerxes, counting Artaxerxes' reign from this supposed co-regency, and ending the 69 weeks with the first Passover of Christ's ministry, instead of Daniel's prediction that Messiah "shall be cut off" then. He has the Messiah cut off in the "beginning of the fourth or middle year" of the 70th week, which he has directly following the 69th week (pp.803,805,815).
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4. Hodge comments, “This table utilizes a 360-day calendar as most ancient calendars had in the Middle East. This was likely the calendar passed down to these various cultures from Noah and his family before deviations occurred. No one used the 365-day year until the Egyptians, according to Herodotus book 2, line 4. The ancient name for Egypt is Mizr. The Egyptians were descendants of ("began with") Noah’s grandson Mizraim, so this was at least a century after the Flood, as we note father to son generations were 30--35 years then(Gen.10:6;11:12-16). Virtually all other ancient calendars used a 360-day year with an intercalary month every few years. This was likely a carry-over from Noah through Babel. So we should stick with the 360-day year. This particular Flood year is assumed to exclude an intercalary month.
Hodge, Bodie, biblical overview of the flood timeline,8/23/10 www.answersingenesis.org
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2. Jones, p. 137.
3. Winton, p.60 ; Nimrud Prism, iv.25-41.
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ASSYRIA

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3 Anstey, Martin, *The Romance of Biblical Chronology*, London 1913, p.220.
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6. Rohl, p. 127.
17. Clarity, Eve. Pharaoh's of the Bible. 2012. p. 302. His hawkhead coffin was overlaid with silver, and he had 4 miniature silver coffins for his organs, instead of pottery jars as the other pharaohs.

7a. Jones, pp. 84-5. Jones adds, “For example, the Assyrian Eponym canon has 33 eponyms assigned to Tilgath-pileser(II), but the Assyrian king’s list ascribes to him only 32 years…also, there are several gaps in which a number of names have been lost.”
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So that for the construction of that part of Ptolmey’s canon which covers the interval of 109 years between BC 490 and 381, eclipses are entirely wanting, and Ptolmey has to fall back upon the same materials as other chronologers.” P. 285-286.

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3. Brantley, p.68.
4. Cranfill, op.cit. p.231
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Who was the Pharaoh?

1. Besides the chronology problems, those who believe the Hyksos ruled when Israel entered Egypt expound this verse as referring to the native Egyptians only, not the Hyksos rulers. see Jones, p. 50.
The bible also gets criticized because, supposedly in Joseph's time, chariots and horses were not found in Egypt; though Genesis 41:43 & 46:29,34 states they were.

Most scholars say the Hyksos later brought the first horses and chariots into Egypt, though this has recently been challenged. Wu Mingren says," There is some evidence that the Egyptians already had the chariot" : –"Did the Hyksos pull off an ancient invasion of Egypt", Ancient Origins.net.
The ancient images of chariots in Egypt we have, were not used in warfare though, but were bigger, heavier, and used for transportation. (also called "war wagons" because they delivered soldiers to the battle scene, though not used in fighting.) Also, Joseph would not have been given a wife of a priest who worshipped Re in On, as he was given(Gen.41:45). The Hyskos worshipped Seth. Ray states, "On was the center of worship of the sun-god Re, and Joseph's father-in-law was no doubt a priest of Re."
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15a. Many commentators and translations want Pharaoh to have survived the Red Sea incident, and so comment and translate accordingly. For example, In Ex. 15 19, the word "horse," Hebrew: "sus," is masculine singular, but many translations translate sus here: "horses" plural; thus not saying that Pharaoh's specific horse went into the sea; though the MSS say it did. Even if "Horses" were a possible rendering of sus here, Psalm 106:11 makes it crystal clear: "There was not one of them left."
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Tempest Stela

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p.18,67. JNES v.73 .1 .4/14. (with Robert Ritner) u of Chicago press.
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For the 16c BC archaeology estimates however, as Moeller says, this has been a shifting chronology. These results only rule out for sure a 15th c BC date for Thera (the century most bible scholars believe saw the exodus, based primarily on 1K6:1.)
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Is Esoteric Knowledge Scriptural?

1. Millenial theory could look something like this: 1.Creation to Promise, 2.Promise to Cross, 3. Church age, 4.Millenium. The problem is: no scenario adds up to exact thousand-year periods. Our last timeline for the 4 dispensations would yield: Adam to Abram in Ur 2024yrs, Abram to Cross 2225yrs, Church age c.2000 yrs, millenium 1000yrs. As it is close, it is possible to make these periods exact millenia, and so is tempting; but that is forcing the data to conform to theory.
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11	Babel	JonathanPark.com
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16	Noah's flood	ProphesyintheNews
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21.	Job & friends	HolySpiritspeaks.org
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25	Jacob and Esau	Pinterest
26	Jacob& angel	Von Seinle
27.	Rachel	Circleofhope.net
28.	Joseph coat	Emausroadministries
29.	Jacob gets blessing	Govert Flinck
30.	Jacob prospers	Youtube
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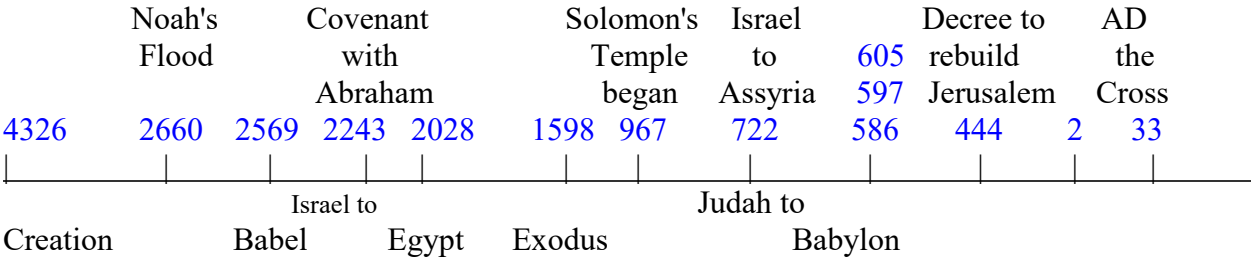
48.	death	TestifyGod.org
50	Snakes	Iamcomingsoon
52.	Blood on doors	Quantumtorch
51	Moses	The 10Commandments.Paramount
53.	baby moses	“
54.	10 laws	The 10Commandments.Paramount
55.	Chariots	JewishHistory.org
58.	slaves	PBS.org
59.	Conquest of Jericho	Youtube
59.	Jericho	Seedoffaith.cph.org
60	Balaam Balak	Mytreasurebox
61.	Joshua & Angel	Pinterest
61	Grapes	Messianic Sabbath
62.	Caleb daughter	YouTube
63.	Rahab helps spies	SeedsofFaith.org
64.	Samson & lion	pixels
65	Samson	Medium.com
67.	Gideon stone	Bing
68.	Samuel & Eli	3abn
69.	Sisera	FreeBibleImages.org
70	Gideon	“
71	Samuel anoints Saul	TravisSnode
74.	David & Goliath	Biblescriptures.net
75	Saul rejected	Pinterest
76	Jonathan	Emaus Revelations
80.	David plays harp	Pinterest
81.	David & Ark	Pinterest
82	Saul dies	BibleFunForKids
83.	David/sheep	JesusWalk
83.	Eli dies	IfiwalkedwithJesus.com
84.	Solomon's temple	J.Post
86.	Heb. MSS	nj.com
88	Scribe	Endtime.org
89	Solomon wealth	FreeBibleImages
90	Elijah raises child	FreeBibleImages
91	Elijah in Chariot	Pinterest
94.	Solomon's court	James Tissot
95.	Ark of Covenant	AncientOrigins
96.	Manasseh repents	2520.org
98	Jeroboam’s idolatry	National Geographic
99	Ahab/Jezebel	Onochurch.org
101.	King Uzziah	wcfs.edu

101	Temple in ruins	csi.org
103	Hezekiah prays	Pinterest
105	Maccabean Coins	JewishLibrary
106.	Cyrus	Wikipedia
106.	Elephantine papyri	Wikipedia
108.	Xerxes seal	Wikipedia
110.	Esther	Faithlife.com
111	Esther & king	IamComingSoon.org
112.	Vashti	Tony A. Maritis
113	Xerxes at Salamis	mlp.org
114.	Esther & Mordecai	Emmaus Road Ministries
115	Esther	Pureflix
116	Haman's gallows	Pinterest
118	Artaxerxes II.	Pinterest
119	wise men see star	CruxNow.com
120.	Simeon	Enemylove
121.	Wise men see Jesus	Supernaturalbibleimages.com
122	Wise men see star	Pinterest
123.	Mary to Egypt	Juicyecumenicism.com
124	Herod & Magi	TheCatholicWeekly
129	John & Herod	Fine Art America
130	Herod coins	AncientResource.com
131	Fiery furnace	Youtube
132.	70 Weeks	According to prophesy.org
133	Nebuchadnezzar	Ibleexplained.net
134.	Daniel	Revere
135	Belshazzar	LifeHopeTruth
136.	Jesus' tomb	Thoughtco.
137.	Behold the man	Antonio Ciseri
138	Gethsemane	If I Walked With Jesus
139.	3 Crosses	Youtube
140	Empty Tomb	Life with Faith
141	Ascension	GraceLutheranChruch
143.	Jesus' cross	Pinterest
148.	Ezekiel 4	Youtube
151.	Document	Wikipedia
152	Divided kingdom	Freebibleimages.org
153.	Assyrians	Medium.com
158.	Merneptah Stele	Wikipedia
159	scarabs	Israeli antiquities authority
160	Jericho	Pinterest
161	Jerusalem	Wikipedia
163.	Warrior Pharaoh	Adh3d
164.	Mummies	Telegraph.co.uk
166.	Slaves	SitesGoogle.com
167.	Pharaoh drowns	Pinterest
168.	Tomb inscription	Wikipedia
169.	Exodus route	SDAglobal
170	Berlin Pedestal	Wikipedia
171.	Hyksos dominion	Pinterest
173.	Exodus route	Bible.ca
173	Hyksos chariot	Pinterest
174	Newieba Beach	SDAglobal

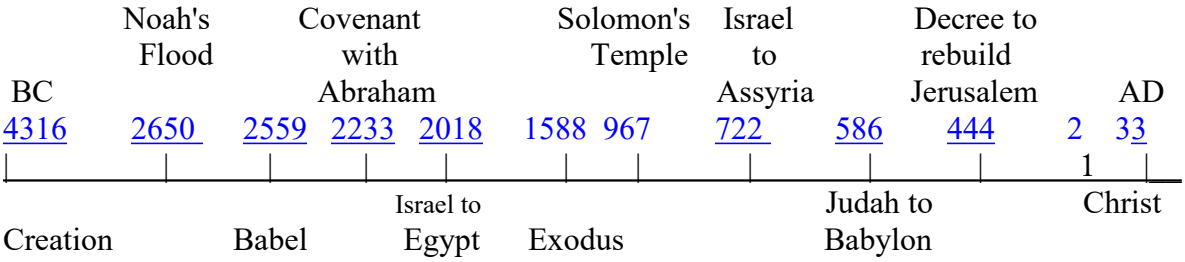
175	Red Sea	BibleBlender
177.	Gulf of Suez	Bible.ca
179	Chariots in sea	The 10 Commandments.Paramount
180	Red Sea Cross	Hidyadullah.com
181.	Tempest Stele	Smidgen
183	Karnak temple	MemphisTours
180.	Mt.Horeb	EarlyChurchHistory
182	Volcano	CBS news.com
183	Pyramids	Discovering Egypt.com
184.	Numbers	Halli Katte
195.	Timeline	ParousiaMedia
196.	Son of Man	Pinterest
197.	Prophets	Kimberlychurchof Christ
back ic	Books	Kristenhagen.com
covers	Stars	Freepic.com

Sample Timelines (Dates BC):

There are four time periods usually disputed in the Hebrew Bible with their limits:
1. The time Israel was in Egypt (varies 215 years)
2. The time Israel was in Canaan until the first judge. (varies 30 years)
3. The times of the judges to 4th year of Solomon. (varies 125 years)
4. The time of divided kingdoms. (varies 45 years)



This sample timeline above uses the birth of Peleg for Babel, 430 years for Israel in Egypt, the short kings chronology for the divided kingdoms (345 years) and uses 631 years for the period Exodus to the Temple.
The timeline below has 345 years for the kings' period with 621 years for the Exodus to temple start period, and 430 years for Israel in Egypt.



The timeline below has Sojourn in Egypt: 430 years, Exodus to temple: 612 years, Divided Kings:345years.

BC	Flood	Covenant Abram			Solomon temple	Israel Assyria		Decree-Jerusalem		AD	
4307	2651	2550	2224	2009	1579	967	722	586	444	2	33

Israel to Creation — Babel — Judah to Egypt — Exodus — Christ — Babylon

This one below uses 603 years exodus to temple start, 430 years in Egypt, & 390 kings.

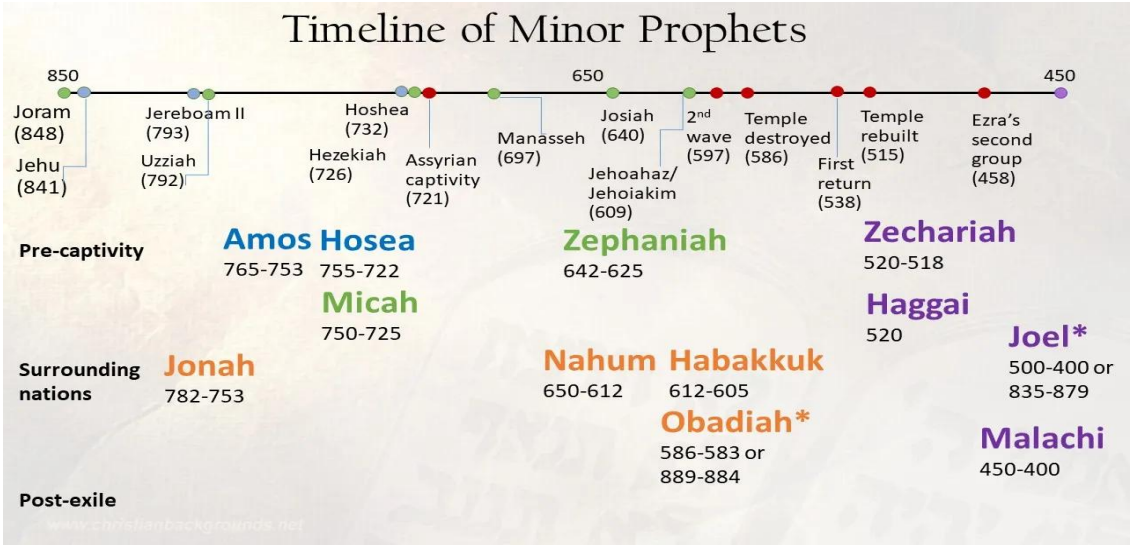
BC	Flood	Babel	Abram to Canaan			Sol. temple	Israel Assyria		Decree of Longimanus		AD	
4343	2687	2586	2260	2045	1615	1012	722	586	444	2	33	

Creation — Egypt — Exodus — Judah Babylon — Christ

This one has 430 years in Egypt, 616 years to the temple, and 390 years of divided kings.

BC Creation	Flood	Babel	Abram	Israel in Egypt	Exodus	Solomon Temple	Judah to Babylon	Christ birth	AD	
4356	2700	2599	2273	2058	1628	1012	586	2	33	†

*(if the date for the fall of Avaris was 1562 as proposed by Onvlee, the Exodus probably occurred 2 years prior in 1564 when Avaris was besieged, and so making a creation date at 4298 by this secular+biblical model; and this is in the possible biblical date range for these times from scripture alone.



Wayne Melloy Myhre is a graduate of the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, and Clark College, Vancouver Washington. Other books by the author include Mysteries of Ancient History in the Bible,Who was the Pharaoh that Drowned in the Red Sea, and The Book of Life. His avocation is Bible apologetics/ Bible Chronology.

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